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GOD AND THE FUTURE LIFE

THE

REASONABLENESS OF CHRISTIANITY

By CHARLES NORDHOFF

AUTHOR OF

"POLITICS FOR YOUNG AMERICANS" "CAPE COD AND ALL ALONG SHORE"
"THE COMMUNISTIC SOCIETIES OF THE UNITED STATES" ETC.

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TO PARENTS AND TEACHERS.

"Natural Theology" has been defined as that department of study which treats of the existence and attributes of God as these are revealed to us in the world of nature.

Many eminent men—not only theologians but scientists—have written treatises of natural theology, and the work of Paley, the most famous of this kind, was for a long period one of the books which young people were expected to read; it was commonly used as a text-book in my own school-days. It is now thought to be out of date, and is no longer seen in schools, and not often in households; but it remains, in my belief, a valuable, as it is certainly an interesting book, not only for youth, but for mature men and women.

If I venture to offer here another book on Natural Religion, this is because I have seen that Paley's and other well-known works, written before recent and very important discoveries and new theories in science, do not entirely meet the questions which not only our young people, but many of their thoughtful elders, nowadays ask.

But I have also another reason for venturing upon this field, and it seems to me a very important one. Those whose thoughts are already interested in these questions—of God and a Future Life—form but a part of the community. There is another, and not a small part, which takes little or no interest in such thoughts. The burden and pressure of life are so great, the temptations to merely worldly living are so increasingly powerful, in our days, that, among young people particularly, we see too many who refuse to take any account of the future life, but become absorbed in the ambitions and pleasures of the present.

I confess that a main stimulus to the writing of the present work was my hope that it might attract the attention of such persons, whether young or old, and turn their eyes upon a larger, broader, and juster view of life.

It remains true, also, that, whether we wish it or not, young people, and many older ones too, are worried with doubts and fears which did not trouble the Christian world half a century ago. Science—the inquiry into natural phenomena and their "laws"—has been "popularized," as the phrase goes, and some men assert, and many ignorantly believe, that there has arisen a "conflict between science and religion;" which is as though one should assert that there is a conflict between the multiplication table and the higher geometry. Still, this supposed "conflict" is

undoubtedly a terror to many good men and women, who imagine that religion is in danger from the advance of science; and who close their eyes and refuse to reason about the existence of God and the Future Life, because they fear that that way lies loss of Faith. So strong and wide-spread is this fear, that I have been warned by friends who approve entirely of the objects and are kind enough also to praise the execution of my little book, that it will be kept out of some Christian households, because "the parents do not wish their young people to consider such matters."

One ought not to treat disrespectfully such fears, although they are needless. Mistaken as they are, they have their origin in an anxious solicitude for the moral and spiritual welfare of their children, which conscientious parents are bound to feel. But to those who are subject to such alarms it is proper to say here that I would rather burn my book than place even a slight stumbling-block in the way of a single human being's religious faith. The main object of my writing has been, on the contrary, to revive and strengthen this faith; and the book has grown largely out of an earnest wish to maintain and invigorate in my own young people, and the children of dear friends, that hope and confident Christian faith in God and immortality which is, in my belief, the chief and only true solace for the trouble of living here.

We cannot, if we would, prevent our young people from discussing these questions. But surely no thoughtful father or mother would like to see son or daughter grow up without thought of them. The more intelligent youth are, the wider their reading and study, the more certain they are to ask and discuss. It seems to me of great importance that their questions should have answer; that their discussions should be reasonable and well-informed. In that way, at least, they are the more certain to maintain a living interest in these profoundly important matters, which otherwise they may, as many do, put aside and out of their minds, as things which they "may leave to the clergy," or which "do not concern them." The way to inspire our youth with the Christian faith in God and immortality is, it seems to me, to meet their inquiries frankly, to welcome them as reasonable, proper, and tending, if pursued in an honest and respectful spirit, only to the firmer establishment of that right thinking out of which alone can grow right living: "for he that cometh to God must believe that He is; and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

I believe, then, that he who asks, as so many are doing in these days—secretly oftener than openly—whether or no there is really a God who not only created but who also continues to care for the affairs and inhabitants of this world, has at least taken a first important step. He shows that he thinks the

matter worth an inquiry, and he deserves an answer from those who believe.

He who asks whether there is a Future Life shows by his question at least some interest in what is a supremely important matter to us all. He ought to be encouraged and not reproved for his curiosity. It would be a pity to have him come to a wrong conclusion; but in my belief it would be very much worse if he took no interest in the question at all—if he thought it a matter of no concern or no importance to him.

"What is Life?" is a question now, more than ever before, engaging the attention of thoughtful men and women. In this problem x may represent that unknown quantity, lying outside of our knowledge and experience, which is the subject of this speculation and inquiry.

There are those who assert that $x=0$.

So far it is absolutely certain that no one has proved this proposition. No one has been able to demonstrate that x is equal to zero.

Neither (aside from Revelation), it must be granted, has any one been able to scientifically prove the converse—that $x=$a continuous and conscious prolongation of our lives after the death of the body.

In fact, x is in this case not only an unknown but an unknowable quantity.

There are many such in physics; but that does not prevent science from dealing with them. No

one has seen, or in any other way physically apprehended, an atom or a molecule. Yet a great body of science deals fearlessly with these unknown and unknowable quantities, and comes to sufficiently sensible conclusions. In such matters science does not think it unreasonable to reason, because science holds, from a wide experience, that the material universe is based on laws, some known and many others still unknown to us; but—and this is the fundamental proposition on which all science rests—that there is a general consistence and harmony of things, so that from a careful scrutiny and comparison of known phenomena science may not only discover the "laws," so called, on which they proceed, but may, moreover, confidently predicate still other phenomena and other laws, having regard to what still remains unknown.

Thus, in the language of the apostle Paul, "The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, *being understood by the things that are made.*"

Out of the entirely legitimate speculations of science are thus born hypotheses which, if they are found to conform with general accuracy to known phenomena and laws, become theories.

Now, the processes which are thus legitimate when used by scientific investigators in the ascertainment of merely material, and therefore secondary, matters, cannot become illegitimate if they are applied also to the very highest relations of all, those which con-

cern our nobler part—the mind or spirit—and the settlement of which must necessarily control the conduct of our lives: for Paul reasoned logically when he said, "If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."

"No man hath seen God with his eyes at any time in this life," and so no one has seen an atom of matter.

It is not possible to demonstrate scientifically that the soul of man may have continued life after the death of the body.

But neither is it possible to demonstrate the contrary.

The defender of the atomic theory supports it, because he finds that it gives a sensible explanation and justification of a multitude of known phenomena, and is consistent with well ascertained "natural laws." *In like manner the theory of the existence of God, and the reality of a future life, finds its justification in all that is now ascertained of the material universe, and of human life on this planet.*

It is in strict harmony with all we know; while the opposite hypothesis introduces confusion, and may for that reason be held, scientifically, to be in the highest degree improbable—until at least some slight evidence for it shall be produced.

The book which follows was written for young

people, and I have used the direct and familiar address with which one naturally speaks to youth. But, as I have been unusually frank in this preface, I will here add that I hope to have for my readers not only young people, but some of mature years as well. There are, alas! very many men and women in these days whose faith is feeble and uncertain, a source of discomfort to them rather than of joy: to some such I hope my little book may prove helpful.

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GOD AND THE FUTURE LIFE.

INTRODUCTION.

My dear Children,—Some of you are now at the age when you are about to leave the hands of the pious mother who has carefully and lovingly instructed you in your Christian duties, and tried to fix you in correct habits of life. She has taught you that the Christian religion prescribes the true rule of living; that the practices it inculcates are necessary for the proper conduct of your life here, and for happy development in a life hereafter; that you should regard God as a loving Father, and his commands as the rule of your conduct.

As you emerge from the kindly shelter of her affections and enter upon the world, the first challenge you receive is a challenge of this faith which, as children, you have been accustomed to regard as not only sacred but undisputed. It has been a surprise to the elder of you to discover that the Christian

world, so called, consists nowadays, in the main, not of good and bad believers—of persons all or nearly all of whom are agreed to accept the Christian doctrines and theory of life, and differ only in the manner and degree to which their common belief influences and controls their lives—but that it contains an increasing number of more or less intelligent and well-intending people, who, silently or openly, repudiate this common belief, and deny or doubt the fundamental tenets of the Christian faith, the existence of God, and the immortality of the soul.

You cannot live in the world and remain ignorant of, or unaffected by, this doubt and unbelief which are sweeping through Christendom. You will encounter them at every step. In much that you will read, if you are to be intelligent men and women, and in the conversation of thoughtful as well as of frivolous people, but still more in the conduct and policy of a great multitude of the thoughtless, you will be forced to see, if you think on so important a matter at all, that the theory of life propounded by Jesus is either rejected, or, in much the greater number of cases, is held in a perfunctory manner, as a kind of vague Sunday faith which has little application to, or influence on, every-day life.

It is not easy to live in the world and not be affected by its thoughts and customs. Man is a social

being; and you will find nothing in your life so difficult as to remain unmoved by the spirit of those among whom you live, or to resist the subtle influence of the habits and thoughts of those about you. You may see, every day, how even strong men have their notions of right and wrong warped by the general course of the society in which they are cast; how easily we drift with the general current; how, insensibly to themselves, men's lives are shaped, their conduct changed, their resolves weakened, by the force of social forms and habits. You need great powers of resistance to withstand such influences; and you need to help you, as I shall endeavor to make plain to you in what follows, the conservative force which we can get only from positive religious convictions so strongly held as to exert a constant and mastering influence over our thoughts and aims.

It is proper and necessary to your real happiness, not only hereafter but in this life, that each one of you shall live his own life; that you shall establish a personal, individual existence as a man or woman; because otherwise you would become, as too many do, merely an insignificant fragment of a great mass, surging hither and thither on the motion of vague or blind general impulses, the sport of circumstances, or of stronger wills than your own.

It is not necessary that you should be rich, or powerful, or famous; these incidents are far more a hinderance than a help to a true life. There is no place in society, however low, in which a man or woman may not, with effort, live an individual life; and this I conceive to be the most important of all to us, because it is as individuals, as substantive personalities, if at all, that we are to live in the future life; not as undivided and undistinguishable fragments of some vast chaotic mass of life. Your bodies may be swept hither and thither on the uncontrollable waves of society and events; but it is your spiritual part, your souls, which have the only real importance.

Your soul—if you have one—that is *you;* and it was because he saw that the training toward higher things of this spiritual and immortal part was the one matter of supreme and overshadowing importance, that the great teacher Arnold of Rugby wrote that "the only thing of moment in life or in man is character."

The body is like the clothes you put on it. The soul is the man.

If we have this individuality of which I speak, if we have souls or spiritual parts capable of existence hereafter and beyond death, surely it is our most important labor here to preserve, to train, and improve this nobler and only substantial part of ourselves.

I.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FAITH.

The future—that which is to come—even in this life, is to us dark and impenetrable; hence we speak of "faith." We cannot foreknow; hence we speak of "believing."

Nothing is more universally and absolutely true than that we "walk by faith." Even in the affairs of this life the doubter is weak; the successful, the powerful men are those who take much upon trust. They study the laws of trade, of nature, or of the human mind; and they make their ventures, or plan their course, not because they can foresee details or certainly foretell results, not because they can grasp all the elements; but in the faith that, with proper effort on their parts, and working in accordance with the laws of nature and of human nature, success will follow.

No great worldly success even is gained without a large and inspiring faith in him who is to gain it. No man has conquered difficulties, or overcome serious obstacles, who has not known times in the

struggle when all the facts and all the force of events seemed to be against him, and when, but for his belief in the lawfulness of his cause, or in the care and skill with which his enterprise was planned, he would have given up. The weak, who falter and run away, are those who lack faith in this general sense. The commander who believes he is going to be beaten is beaten already; the merchant who expects failure is crippled in advance: it is the man who believes who does the impossible; and even in this merely worldly sense it is true that by faith men have removed mountains.

The immediate future in our lives is so impenetrable to all of us that we constantly need to "walk by faith" even in the commonest enterprises, and "Nothing venture nothing win" is a proverb.

A prudent man planning an enterprise begins by examining all its elements, all the obstacles in his way, all the details likely to make for or against his success; but if he is wise, he above all things takes care that what he proposes shall be in harmony with natural laws, and shall be helpful to the general interests and welfare of society—that is to say, of his fellow-men. He knows beforehand that he cannot hope entirely to control events; and he guards, so far as possible, against the inevitable uncertainties by founding him-

self upon the general prosperity, and by going along with and not contrary to those natural laws which he understands. It is in this way that great and permanent successes are made. Thus a young man planning a career for himself would, if he were far-sighted and wise enough to deserve success, take care in the beginning that his plans were not to violate natural laws, nor to be hurtful, but beneficial, to his fellowmen; and, having taken this precaution, he would go on, largely on faith, against great and frequent discouragements, often in poverty, friendless, misunderstood, perhaps in temporary defeat and disgrace; but he would follow in one fixed direction, and govern his life and his course by the lines he had laid out in the beginning.

To do otherwise, to set out without definite purpose, to change from one kind of effort to another at slight temptations of fortune, would be, as you easily see, to fritter away his life; to waste his strength without result. To be unstable, to "do everything by turns and nothing well," to live one's life without some fixed theory of action, to drift, even in the affairs of this brief life, is acknowledged by everybody to be unwise, unfit, and even deserving contempt. It is to be the sport of circumstances and to invite failure.

Now, what is thus plainly true in the affairs of

this life must be, as I would like you to see, true in a far greater and more important sense, if you are to look for another and more permanent existence after death. If this life in the body is not all, but if it is only the prelude to a far broader, more enduring, and higher existence for you, necessarily you ought to take that other and larger part of your life into account in all your plans and thoughts. To do otherwise would be to neglect the precautions which men take, as I have said, for objects of infinitely less importance. It would be as though one should engage an architect to build a cellar, but run up a costly house over it without regard to the skill or experience even of a builder or practical mechanic.

To consent to live without definite notions of its objects and tendencies, must needs make all human effort random and unsatisfactory, and human life an aimless or a selfish and merely animal existence. The man who does this can only drift. He is the creature of his impulses and of his fears, as are the animals. We have been left intellectually free to believe as seems to us most reasonable and conclusive on this great question. You may satisfy your minds, as some have done, that there is no God, and no future life for you; and when you come to this conviction or faith you will live accordingly. Or you may convince yourself that there is a God, and

that your life—yourself—will continue after your body perishes; and as, in the other case, if this belief takes root in your mind, if it is a conviction, you will be impelled to plan your present life in accordance with it. But it is plainly your highest duty to yourself, it is the one thing necessary to your own real manhood or womanhood, and to your satisfactory living, that you shall come to *some* conclusion. You ought not to put it aside; for it is mainly the ability to consider this question which makes us higher than, and different from, the animals; and it is the conviction to which you come, the Faith which comes to you and becomes part of you, which alone can enable you to plan your life satisfactorily, and to live it with purpose and effectively.

That is to say, you cannot live, in any sense higher than the merest animal existence, without faith. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he;" and if he will not think at all of this problem of what life means, or if he is content to think vaguely and carelessly, necessarily he drifts, as a ship whose master lays no course for her; he tends to become no better, but rather worse, than the beasts which perish; he abandons that which, if there is a future life, is the only important or enduring part of him, and which, even in this life, is needed to make him a MAN, and not merely (as we see in so many instances) an abler

and more dangerous kind of animal. Nothing is so important to the direction of your lives and your efforts, to the maintenance of your self-possession and serenity of soul, as that you shall be possessed by a definite, firmly grasped belief as to the real objects of your life, and its duration and character.

To live without God in the world is sufficiently dreary; but the man who sincerely and soberly denies God and a future life, though I think him a very unenviable being, has yet a faith, and may, in my belief, be happier and more useful to his fellowmen than that great number who refuse to think at all of this subject, or even than those whose faith is perfunctory, vague, a source of confusion, irresolution, and terror, and not of the strength and consistency which come of a real belief.

II.

THE REASONABLENESS OF RELIGIOUS FAITH.

I HAVE tried, in what goes before, to impress on your minds that a belief of some kind concerning the meaning and purpose of human life is necessary to raise us above the beasts, with whom, so far as regards our bodies, we have so much in common. Life without some such belief—life without Faith, in this sense—is unendurable to thoughtful men and women. You will notice that coincidently with the general and lamentable decadence of faith in the Christian theory of life, which marks our century, has come a new and vigorous discussion of the question, What is the true meaning of life? Some of the very men who most positively and earnestly reject the Christian faith are the most indefatigable in their efforts to establish some other theory of life. They cannot rest with mere negation; and you may see in the tone and drift of their discussions how intolerable to these thoughtful doubters is mere doubting; how necessary to their peace of mind is a settled belief of some kind. The men who in

these days deny the existence of God and the immortality of the soul, are farthest from resting content with this mere denial; they are the most active, the most prominent and zealous in their effort to discover some other and tenable faith—some other theory on which to explain satisfactorily to themselves, and harmoniously with the general laws of nature and the creation, the meaning and purpose of human life. Thus, strangely enough, this great question has never been so earnestly and widely considered as now, in this which is often called the Age of the Decadence of Faith.

They, too, who reject Christianity thus acknowledge that a faith of some kind is necessary to their comfort and satisfaction.

Therefore, that you ought to think clearly on this subject, and that you ought to settle to some form of faith, as indispensable to your satisfactory living, you may hold certain.

What, then, ought you to believe on this question?

I believe profoundly that there is a God, and a Future Life. The more I see of human life; the more I learn of what are called natural laws; the more closely I study the history of our race, of the earth, and of the universe, the more decidedly this seems to me to be the most reasonable, and the only reasonable belief.

Naturally, I would like you to be "moved by the same faith" with myself. While you remained children it was sufficient for you to know that the matters I speak of were declared by Jesus, and are found in the Bible. You had no occasion to look farther; and to millions who, happily perhaps for themselves, do not come into contact with, or under the influence of the modern spirit of doubt, this remains, in like manner, conclusive. The words and the life of Jesus suffice for them. But the tendency, and often the effect, of modern discussion is to weaken and shake this simpler faith. Of this we cannot complain; but it forces us to look more carefully into the subject, and, if possible, to seek a reason for the faith that is within us—outside of the Bible—because the men and the books we reason with, and which appeal to our minds often with great force and acuteness, will not accept the Bible as final.

A clergyman in the pulpit may declare that it is true that there is a God, and that he has destined us to a future life, *because* the Bible so declares. But the unbeliever replies, "It may be true, but I will not take it on the evidence you present. If a college professor tells me that a proposition in mathematics is true *because* Euclid so delivered it, I reply to him, it may be true, but it is not true for the reason you give, but outside of that altogether. Dem-

onstrate its truth to me, then I will believe. Euclid is but a reporter. I will not accept him for more than that."

And this young doubter proposes to treat the Bible as of no more final authority than a book of mathematics. He admits that, in citing the Bible, the clergyman has offered what lawyers call presumptive evidence, but asserts that he has not necessarily proved his case.

Now, I do not know that those of us who believe have a right to blame this doubter. We have a right, if we choose, or if by our intellectual training we are impelled to it, to use our reasoning powers on this as on all other subjects. We have a right to inquire; and as this question is the most important of all to ourselves, we are bound to inquire. And while we cannot expect to arrive at absolute certainty on this, as on some other less important questions, I believe that intelligent inquiry will only result in strengthening faith; and that the more closely you examine the theory that there is a God, and that there is for us a future life, the more you will be convinced that all the probabilities lie on that side; and that those who deny these positions require, in fact, from you a greater stretch of faith, and impose upon your minds a far greater strain, than those who ask you to believe.

It would be strange and puzzling to us who accept the Bible as true if this were not so; for to admit that the Scripture teachings of God and a future life are repugnant to the course of nature, and to what we can know of human life and character, would be to say that God contradicts himself. It is more reasonable to expect that the belief which we draw from the Bible must be confirmed by what we see in the material universe, and that the word and the works of God must be consistent with each other.

While He has declared that no man shall see him at any time with his eyes in this life, and while He has hidden the future beyond the grave absolutely from apprehension by our bodily senses, we may, I believe, arrive at such an assurance on these subjects, from a view of the present life and of all the universe that surrounds us, as, though it cannot resolve all mysteries (and thus make faith of no importance), will yet place that faith on a reasonable basis, and confirm it by all that human thought can master of the works and laws of the Creator.

Please to observe that the greatest discoveries in science, of these later days, rest on no stronger foundation than this. The theory of Evolution is not proved—no man has seen the changes which it supposes; all that its supporters assert is, that in some

large and important aspects, but not in all, it explains the course of organic life, and the changes this has undergone, more perfectly than other theories which have been advanced. The molecular theory in physics is not proved in the sense that any one has seen, or in any other way physically apprehended, a molecule, or an atom of matter. Your teacher in physics will tell you only that it explains certain phenomena of matter better, and all these phenomena more completely, than any other theory. Now, what we, who believe in God and in a future life, may reasonably expect to find in a study of human life and of nature is, that our theory shall have like confirmation with these others.

If a young man at school or college should say to his teacher, "I refuse to look farther into the atomic theory which you are teaching unless you will first show me an atom," he would rightly be thought a bumptious young fellow, only moderately endowed with common-sense. But this would be just as reasonable as if one should say, "I decline to believe in God unless you show me God; or in the future life unless you first produce me a being from that future state."

On the other hand, the inquirer into physical phenomena, when he has satisfied himself of a truth, makes that, so far as it applies, a basis of his further

investigations. The mathematician, satisfied that twice two makes four—why, he knows not—does not thereupon neglect this important element in his calculations; does not treat it as of little or no consequence. He makes it, on the contrary, the guide, the controlling factor in all his calculations. It informs and overrules his mathematical life. If, by any strange chance, doubt should be thrown on its truth, he would not rest until he had established it, or had found some equivalent truth to replace it.

In like manner I have endeavored, in previous chapters, to show you how and why whatever beliefs you may hold concerning God and the future life ought to become the rule of your conduct; that a right belief is of vital importance if you desire to make anything satisfactory out of your life; if it is to be anything more than a medley of confused and random acts.

God has chosen, for various reasons, some of which are sufficiently obvious, to conceal from us not merely that part of our lives which lies beyond the grave, but even all knowledge of the immediate future in this life. But he has given us reasoning faculties, has enabled us to observe facts and to draw conclusions—in short, to think. I believe that, while he has filled our lives with mysteries which we vainly strive to comprehend, he has not exacted of us either

unreasonable or unreasoning belief; and that in this supremely important matter of the future life we may come to as valid conclusions by inquiry and reasoning as men of science do in many of their investigations from the known to the unknown, or as they also do where their field of facts is large enough —in reasoning from the known to the admittedly unknowable.

To proceed systematically to the inquiry which I urge, it seems advisable to consider first what you really are, what kind of being, and what kind of circumstances surround you.

III.

WHAT ARE YOU?

You are a rational, that is to say, a thinking and reasoning being, brought into existence without your previous knowledge or consent; placed here in circumstances more or less disagreeable; subject to pain and to various kinds of suffering, the least of which, please observe, are those which affect your body; and finally to the decay and dissolution of this body.

You are unable to control your physical life, either in its circumstances or its duration, except to an extremely moderate degree. You are moved by impulses, desires, and passions, almost all of a kind injurious not only to your nobler or spiritual part, but even to your body, and which require your constant attention to control, or even to guide them. Ignorant to a very great extent of the laws of your physical being, your powers are limited on every side by boundaries which no effort of yours, or of all mankind, can do more than widen a very little; for by no means in your reach can you foreknow even what

may happen in the next moment to yourself, or to those dearer to you than your own life. The wisest of mankind is without sufficient knowledge to guard his life securely against danger or distress. Your whole existence here is one continuous uncertainty; and so true is this that, in spite of the wisdom of the most prudent and care-taking, a proverb relates that "it is the unexpected which always happens."

From the moment of your birth but one event is certain for you, and that is your death; and you cannot even foreknow the time when this will come. As an intelligent being, you have a boundless capacity and desire for knowledge; and you see in the universe, and even on this planet, an illimitable field for inquiry and acquisition. Yet we scarcely begin to know what knowledge is in any branch of life or nature before bodily infirmities and old age impair our physical energies and weaken the organs on whose help we depend for the exercise of our intellectual powers: as the explorer of a strange continent might be crippled on the threshold of his discoveries by the breaking down of his wagons, the death of his horses, or the desertion of his guides.

You can hope, by the utmost efforts of a long life, to know by sight only a small part of the planet on which we live; yet you know that our earth is but one of myriads of worlds, and that our sun and

its planets form only one of the smaller of the systems which crowd the universe. You are surrounded by mysteries which the wisest of our race call "laws," and can no further explain; and if you could master all science and all knowledge, you would only know that man has penetrated with uncertain hands but skin-deep into the infinite.

A great part of our life here is needed to teach us even the most superficial knowledge of the laws of our physical being; and yet all the knowledge we may gain and apply does not suffice to protect us against the gravest calamities or the most unlooked-for and painful mishaps. You have a desire for virtuous conduct, yet find yourself constantly the prey of tendencies to vice and wrong-doing. Your whole conscious life here, if it is rightly conducted, is necessarily an unremitting strife with your evil propensities, which, on the least indulgence, are prone to become fixed as habits; and with the utmost care we know not at what moment evil will overcome our good intentions.

Plan your life as carefully, as prudently as you may, bend all your energies to the achievement of your purposes, and yet you may discover in the end that your plans were blunders, and that your labors have led only to the disappointment of your hopes.

And finally, at the end of the most fortunate life, comes death.

If, then, we are to conclude that there is no possibility of life for us beyond the body, that physical death means the extinction not merely of our bodies but of *ourselves*, then certainly mankind are the sport of a very cruel and ghastly injustice; and we may reasonably ask by what strange and not to be looked for stroke of unreason, in a universe which we perceive on every hand to be the harmonious creature of laws, men have been endowed with faculties doomed to be wasted, with intelligent desires foreordained only to disappointment? How comes this huge and inexplicable incongruity in a system which, in every part of it, save this highest, is evidently based on purpose, and carried on upon an intelligent plan?

IV.

YOU ARE AN INDIVIDUAL.

Such, however, is your life, and you are to live it upon such a plan as you may choose to form.

You are at liberty to plan for yourself; and not only this, you *must* do so. You are an individual, a distinct personality. For a time, during your immature life you lived under the guidance of father and mother; but the most tender and the wisest parents even can, as a very wide experience teaches, far more easily spoil than make the lives of their children. It is your own effort, your own will alone which can make you a man or a woman in any true sense.

You can, at any time, share this individuality—yourself—with others only to an extremely limited extent. Live as intimately as you may with another, you never become wholly one with him.

Your mother mourns in her heart that, though you are her own, she knows you not.

At bottom each one of us is solitary—alone with God.

Each one of us must choose for himself what he will make of this life, which has come to him without his asking, and in which he finds himself not only free but forced to choose.

Now, in making up your mind what to do with your life, your first reasonable inquiry will be this one: How long is it to last? and in what conditions is it to be passed? If your conscious and personal existence is to have only a little longer duration than the life of a cow, and a little shorter than that of a crow, or an elephant, that fact, if it is a fact, must very greatly control your plans. If, on the other hand, you find reason to believe that this life in the body is to be but a very small and insignificant fraction of your whole existence, and that your personality will continue unimpaired beyond the grave, and in a condition where you will act without reference to your present physical part (your body), that fact, if it is a fact, can scarcely fail, if it impresses itself on your mind, to make all your plans for this life very greatly and essentially different.

You will easily see that this must be so, if you will reflect that an event which would be of the greatest moment to you if this life were all you had to live, might assume an entirely different aspect and significance if this is but a small part of your existence, and if, in fact, the few years you are to pass

here in the company of your body are, compared with the total duration of your life, far less than the few brief years you pass at school would appear, if compared with the full span of human life of three-score years and ten.

A cow, being hungry and unable to find food otherwise, leaps a fence and eats her fill in a strange field. Nor do we blame her. Only a beating—the dread of a severer pain than hunger—will keep her within her master's bounds. But a man, a reasoning being, suffers hunger and refuses to steal—not from fear of the constable and the jail, but because he will not taint his soul, his immortal part, with wrong to gratify his body.

If it were an immemorial custom of our colleges to lead the members of the graduating class to the public square or *campus* as soon as they had received their diplomas, and there and then cut off their heads, it is not absolutely impossible that young men would still be sent to college—for the power of fashion is very great. But, being placed there, they certainly would not give themselves to the fulfilment of disagreeable duties, nor deny themselves any pleasures within their reach. If any studied, it would be because the acquisition of knowledge was, on the whole, more agreeable to them than some other form of dissipation; and, with extinction only four

years ahead, each would follow his own impulses. To talk of duty or of self-denial to men so placed would seem to them ridiculous, and would, in fact, be so.

But a boy who is reasonably persuaded that the object of attending school, or learning a trade, is to fit him for the duties and enjoyments of manhood, reconciles himself to the disagreeables, the self-denial and submission which his student or apprentice life imposes, because he believes that there is a higher life beyond the school or the apprentice's term, a life of greater activity, greater independence, and wider enjoyments, for which he is laboriously and perhaps even painfully fitting himself, and into which he justly believes he could not enter without such preliminary training.

You will see, I think, out of all this that what your plans in life shall be, what you will make the object of your hopes and aims, and by what means you will prosecute these objects—what manner of man or woman you are to be, in short—must depend absolutely upon what you conceive life to be, what you believe to be the bearings of this life; what is to be the duration of your whole existence.

But, if you reflect a little, you will perceive something further, namely, that patience, self-sacrifice, cheerful submission to disappointments and discomforts, courage, endurance, all that we call manly and

Christian virtues—those qualities in men for the cultivation of which we respect them, and on which human society rests—do arise out of a belief in a future life. They become reasonable only where the man believes in a life hereafter; nor is there a doubt that if anywhere in a society or nation this belief should die out and become extinct, that society or nation would perish, as an organized body; because its members would rapidly become self-seeking, would scorn self-denial, would refuse submission to the general good. "Every man for himself" would logically become the supreme rule; and it would require the superior force of a dictator or military tyrant to maintain even the commonest arts of civilization in such a society. So true is this, that wherever in any country the thought of and belief in a future life has died out among even a considerable part of the population, there, in the same measure, you see men turn to selfish enjoyments, to brutal or merely animal lives; they avoid duty and self-sacrifice, and seek satisfaction in a scramble for wealth, fashion, ambition, or ease.

You may object that there are men who, rejecting God and denying a future life for themselves or mankind, are still conspicuously laborious for the good of their fellows—benevolent, unselfish, and obedient to a high sense of duty. This is very true;

and so, to recur to my former illustration of the conduct of college students, if they knew that on their graduation they were to be killed, not all would turn to low or degrading pleasures, though it is probable that the greater part would do so. But each would pursue that which most gratified his own mind; and while some would study and read, this would be because to these few the acquisition of knowledge seemed, on the whole, pleasanter than gluttony, drunkenness, or some other form of vicious indulgence.

Nor are you to forget that the long fixed code of morals of Christendom retains inevitably a powerful influence over even those who nowadays deny the Christian doctrine, and especially on those who, rejecting this theory of life, are yet impelled to seek another. Thoughtful sceptics or deniers are the most certain to strive after the highest ideal of living which they can conceive, and to be subjected in their thoughts and aspirations in this life most completely by all that is noble and humane in the Christian code. The mass of mankind are thus affected also, but to a much more limited degree, as we plainly perceive on every hand; and you need only to read the history of the Roman decadence to see what becomes of a nation in which the belief in God and a future life has perished. In that sad and terrible

story you can see how futile is the effort of society to get on without God; how selfishness takes the place of duty where men cease to believe in a future life; how all the barriers of restraint are broken down, and society presently becomes corrupted, depraved, vicious, and at last falls into helpless anarchy.

The belief in God and a future life appears thus to be in harmony with the best interests, and even necessary to the orderly existence of human society. And this is because it operates as a restraint upon the selfish ambitions of the strong, as the protection of the weak, and the consoler of the unfortunate; and because it opens up a life beyond the grave, as the solace and satisfaction of those who find here their efforts thwarted and their hopes failures.

V.

THE NECESSITY OF A LIVING FAITH.

If I insist, even to repetition, upon the importance of Faith, this is because I should like you to grasp solidly this fact, that it is the greatest calamity which can befall a human being to live his life without a firm and permeating belief in God and the future life. "Eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die," is necessarily, though no doubt often unconsciously, the creed of one who has ceased to believe in a future and spiritual life for himself; or, worse yet, of one who, as so many in our days, holds this faith vaguely and formally, as a thing which need have no effect upon his actions, or on his character which is the result of his actions; as a faith which comes to him only as a spectre of terror in his lonely moments, or when he is ill, or in danger or great discomfort.

It is written, "The devils believe also—and tremble;" and the man to whom the faith we are considering takes on this shape—to whom the future after death is a matter of no concern except as it

leaves him a prey to nameless terrors — this man necessarily plays with life as a gambler, sadly or savagely as his temper may lead him, but without hope of any good which he might attain by the proper training of his spirit, outside the narrow and uncertain span of his few earthly days. The stronger willed such a man is, and the better trained his intellect, the more apt he is to resent his circumstances, his companionships, his disabilities and limitations.

It is because the faith of Christendom has been so greatly shaken in modern days, because great masses of men have ceased to believe, in any real sense, in God and the future life, that we see such numbers devoted to the mere pursuit of comfort, wealth, and ambition — to the scramble after the lower pleasures and enjoyments, and the gratification of those desires and passions which pertain to the body, and therefore to this life alone, and undue absorption in which leads to a merely animal existence, and kills the spirit. We see more and more all over the Christian world that as this faith in God and expectation of a future life are weakened or decrease, so discontent, envy of the worldly great and successful, a craving for physical comforts and enjoyments, and a blind worship of success increase; and thus we find a numerous multitude among the

so-called Christian nations, thoughtless and heedless, greedy, covetous, and self-seeking, by reason of unbelief, which makes life to them dark and unreasonable, or hopeless and frivolous.

This spread of unbelief among masses of men comes largely out of the misconduct of those who profess to hold the Christian faith, but who do not carry it into their daily lives. If you go to church on Sunday and profess, in public, to believe in the Christian doctrine, and if at the same time you are seen by your neighbor to be, in your daily life, greedy, covetous, cruel, heartless, unduly ambitious, tyrannical, self-seeking, unscrupulous in the pursuit of your advantages, careless of your neighbor's welfare, unjust, those who live with you, or near you, whose lives your conduct affects, are very likely to reject this faith you profess as untrue and useless, because they see that it does not control your own life. Nor is any human being so humble, or his life so devoid of influence, that his conduct does not affect the lives and opinions of others.

That you shall profoundly and really believe in God and a future life is important, therefore, not only to yourself, but to all who live within reach of your life and are affected by it. The man possessed by this faith must presently find the force of his desires and passions moderated, his griefs and disap-

pointments lessened, his hopes enlarged. He has a wider view of the field, and plans his life on a broader scale. He will reasonably, and not out of mere terror, prefer self-denial to indulgence; what he believes will affect in the most deliberate and vital manner his whole plan of life, his views of conduct, his value of the results of effort, his measure of the importance of success in this life, of all its enjoyments and rewards, as well as of its cares, disappointments, sorrows, and evils. It will reveal to him a meaning and purpose in the accidents of this life, and enable him to arrange in the order of their real importance all its events which affect him. His anxieties will be decreased, his sorrows consoled, his ambition tempered by such a faith.

It is because the Scripture announcement of God and a future life harmonizes so completely with all we know of this life; because it reveals its otherwise hidden purposes, and makes that reasonable and full of meaning which, otherwise regarded, seems to mankind but a madman's tale, "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing," that the message delivered by Jesus has had so profound and striking an effect upon the thoughts and lives of men in all stations, and of all degrees of culture, savage as well as civilized, when it was first made known to them. It is a revelation to mankind of the real object of their

existence; the justification, in their hearts, of what was felt, without this, to be an intolerable burden. Few men, even the most fortunate, unless they are mere animals, arrive at middle life without feeling profoundly that, if this life is all that belongs to us, if for us there is no future beyond the grave, we are only the helpless creatures of a monstrous act of injustice.

The theory of life and society, and of duty, declared by Jesus, clears up this whole mystery. It shows that to be just, reasonable, and in harmony with all we feel in us and see about us, which otherwise would be unjust, and tending to confusion and anarchy. Moreover, the solution it offers has the transcendent merit that it is comprehensible by the most ignorant and the most savage, equally with the most intelligent and highly cultivated, and that it is accepted, as Jesus saw it would be, more readily by the weak, the suffering, the oppressed—the "babes and sucklings"—than by the fortunate and powerful, who are taken up with the affairs and enjoyments of this life, and whose curse it is, as He saw, that in the days of their prosperity and ease they do not feel the need of God.

Our faith is but a larger forecast. If we are to have a share in the future life, it must needs be as conscious individuals; and that life can be only a

continuation of this in other scenes and under different circumstances. When you were little children you looked merely to present gratification; and many men and women remain little children all their lives in this sense. But as you increased in years you saw, dimly often, but the more clearly the more sensible you became, that present self-denial might be wise, as a means of preparation for future enjoyments. At school and elsewhere you undertook labors and suffered privations in order that you might gain in knowledge and experience. And the true purpose of all this training was—pray bear in mind—not merely that you might learn skilfully to perform certain acts, as a bear may be taught to dance, or a pig to pick out at command the spots on a playing-card, but for a very much higher and more important end: to form your characters, and prepare you not merely to be skilful producers of something, adroit machines, but virtuous and useful members of society. If education and training fall short of that effect, they fail of their true end; and if they have not this supreme end in view, they may easily become a curse instead of a blessing to yourself, or to your fellows.

We ought to regard the events of this life as important mainly as they affect our characters, and not as they affect our mere bodily comforts, or further

our plans or ambitions. Wealth, place, power, fame, there is the best reason to believe, we do not carry with us into the other life. We can carry there only *ourselves*, our spiritual part; and to build up that, to improve it, to weed out of ourselves the evil passions which, for some mysterious reason, are so ready to take possession of us, to acquire a preference for and love of righteousness and virtue, and to cast out of our hearts malice, envy, uncharitableness, undue ambition, covetousness, and the other sins which do so easily beset us—this, you readily see, must be the real object of this life, if there is a future life.

But that course which you should pursue, if you believe there is a future life for you—that use you would certainly make of your life on this planet, if you saw the future with the eye of sight, and not dimly through faith—that course it is which, as even those acknowledge who deny God, will make you the best citizen, the best member of society, the most useful and beneficent man or woman here.

The main object of this practice of self-denial, and the other Christian virtues, so called, is to fit the individual for participation in a reasonable and enjoyable life hereafter. That is his final inducement for their practice; for these virtues, though they are so important to the aggregate which we call a Society

or Nation, do not necessarily, or always, tend to the aggrandizement or even the temporary happiness of the individual here. On the contrary, their practice is often fatal to his success, or to his comfort in this life, and even to life itself; while their rejection leads, as we frequently see, to the attainment of many of those things which are most desired by the mass of men. Take, for instance, the case of a soldier volunteering to serve his country in the field, and a contractor remaining at home to secure wealth out of army supplies, or a speculator gaining a fortune by betting on the event of a battle or a campaign. The soldier, after great hardships, perishes in battle, or of disease, or in a prison, leaving his wife and little ones to the cold pity of the pension laws; the contractor or speculator amasses a great fortune, lives at home at ease, and perhaps becomes what is called an "influential member of society." Which of these two did his duty you need not be told. But if there is no future for us, the contractor and speculator were evidently the wisest men—the poor soldier who gave his life freely out of a sense of duty to his country was but a purblind fool. If we are only animals, with no hope of existence beyond this life of the body, it is not to be denied that those of us are the wisest and most "practical" who take care to get the most for ourselves out of this brief

existence, and seize such share as by superior cunning or strength we can grab of that which to us may seem most desirable. There can be, in that case, no question of moral right and wrong, or of duty, but only a question of taste or preference.

But, you may properly ask: Is, then, the poor soldier required to accept all the deprivation and suffering, the untimely death, and the knowledge that he leaves his family helpless—all this with no present satisfaction, and with only the hope, or belief it may be, that in the future life, about which he really knows nothing, he will have some kind of reward he does not know what?

No; he has also a satisfaction in this life, and the greatest which, on the whole, man's life affords. *He has the joyful consciousness of doing his duty.*

The sense of duty done is the brave man's solace in failure or misfortune. He has done what he could: the rest he leaves with God. The cause he believed just has broken down; the plans he had formed have failed; the good he intended has been brought to naught before his eyes; he sees injustice prevail, and wrong triumphant; but he has done his duty; and, oppressed, in poverty, in disgrace, in sorrow, not for himself but for others, or for the cause he believes right and sacred, he is still serene, for he says, "The end I leave with God;" and he trusts

that in the future life he will see that all this failure and suffering had some good meaning which now he cannot penetrate. Holding this faith, life is still important and full of meaning to him, where otherwise extinction would be welcome; and he feels and knows that what concerned him was only to do his duty, and leave the result to God.

Your lives will have been thin and profitless if, before you come to middle-age you have not, more than once or twice, had occasion to seek this consolation, this only real solace for failure in some enterprise or effort where, not your own aggrandizement, but the benefit of others, was your aim.

And observe that it is because there is a God, because there is a future life, because this present life is not all we have to look for, that this cheer is ready for your soul, to maintain its sweetness and serenity. Leave out God, as the all-wise disposer of events, and the failure of your efforts and plans is final defeat for you, and you would soon be persuaded that the service of your fellow-men, the least grateful of tasks, was but childish folly, and that unselfish devotion to disagreeable duties was the vagary of a distempered mind.

It needs all the impulse which can be got from a permeating belief in God and the eternal life to give men patience, unselfishness, endurance in the

performance of disagreeable duties, persistence in irksome, and with men of great natural powers almost unendurable self-restraint, and contentment and moderation among men of lower powers and less force. Animated by a right faith in God, the man says, "I will do my duty, let what will happen." He leaves the result to God.

It was in this sense that St. Augustine wrote that we "ought to cultivate a willingness to be damned" —a readiness to leave mere results to the Great Judge and disposer of all. It is because the practice of self-denial and the performance of duty leads us we cannot know whither in this life, but compels us to a course founded on other and higher considerations than our present welfare, or comfort, or success, that we say the chief inducements to this higher and Christian life are not the pleasure or indulgence of the body, the attainment of "success," or the gratification of those desires and passions which we need the body to fulfil.

VI.

FAITH AND SCIENCE.

Several reasons have combined to cause the recent rapid spread of unbelief in the Christian world.

The great and wonderful advances in scientific discovery made within this century have persuaded many unscientific minds that there is now no longer any further need for God; which is as though a school-boy, having examined the steam-chest, boiler, piston-rod and valves of a locomotive-engine, and satisfied himself that they all work harmoniously together, and with a quite striking adaptation of all the parts to a common purpose, should thereupon decide that there were undoubtedly no machinists or engineers. Though what we know bears but an infinitesimal proportion to the sum of knowledge, we are constantly ascertaining more and more concerning the machinery of the universe; but surely that is no valid reason why we should doubt that this marvellous and complicated and harmoniously working machine had a maker?

The rigorous methods necessary for the accurate

investigation of material phenomena have established a proper habit of doubt, which is sometimes transferred, unconsciously it may be, from its true field, the inquiry into physical facts, to the concerns of the spiritual world. Thus we find some men of science, though not many, refusing to admit the existence of God on the ground that they need not consider what they cannot see with their eyes or prove in the crucible.

But to assert that there are none but physical phenomena is surely the pedantry of science. It is to ignore forces which are obvious to all who read history, or consider the acts of men, or look into their own hearts. That there are moral or spiritual forces at work in the world, no one can doubt; and while the naturalist may choose not to investigate these, he cannot scientifically deny their existence simply because he does not meet with them in the processes of his laboratory. Even in physical investigations the ultimate facts and most important forces cannot be thus proved or identified.

Mr. Buckle, who had a great but short-lived reputation before you were born, undertook to show that the character of a nation could be predicated from the nature of the climate and the fertility of the soil where it existed. His argument was, that men were merely the creatures of their physical surround-

ings; but it was shrewdly said of him by one of his critics, "He omitted to explain the contrast between the ancient Greek nation and the present one: there must have been an extraordinary revolution in the climate or the soil."

He believed that out of the past, if it were closely scrutinized, the future might be intelligently predicted; and it seemed to him a point gained for his theory when he was able to show statistically that out of a thousand letters put into a post-office a certain average are sure to be misdirected. But it was presently seen that this fact was more curious than important, because Mr. Buckle was unable to tell us which of the thousand letter-writers blundered; and *it is the conduct of the individual and the fate of the individual which are of real importance*, and not those of the aggregate called a society or nation.

Man is undoubtedly affected by his circumstances; but it is important to remember also that he affects those circumstances by his character, his will; and that, as it is the individual character and will which here come in play, we cannot reason profitably from aggregates. For instance, there is no doubt that the life of the very poor in our great cities is, in the present state of what we call civilization, in many ways difficult and debasing. Poverty and depend-

ence are real evils, partly because they bring physical discomfort and suffering, and deprivation of pleasures, but mainly because they tend to make the life mean, and to surround it with morally debasing circumstances. Yet no one who has really known even the very poor but will tell you that he has found among them more self-sacrifice, greater love to the neighbor, less greed and covetousness, than among the same number of the comfortable and wealthy. This is so true, and so universally true, that on the self-restraint and self-denial of the poor society depends for its security in all modern states.

It is not to be doubted that this self-restraint comes mainly, if not altogether, out of their faith in a future life, their continuing trust that there is a God, and that he is a just and fatherly being. If you could persuade the tenement-house population of New York that there is no future life beyond the grave, they would sack the Fifth Avenue overnight. In all modern countries where faith has been expelled by the perversion or debasement of religion, and where the thought and hope of the future life have measurably died out among the people, we see a great increase of armies as a police force, while, coincidently, we see the populations more and more given over to the longing for mere bodily enjoyments, with, at the same time, the continual increase

of discontent and a spirit of mutiny. If you will reflect, you must admit that this is only a logical result. If there is no future life, if there is no God, if after this brief existence comes extinction, why should multitudes live in deprivation and want, and see the more cunning and unscrupulous few rolling in luxury? Why should not the most numerous class of society combine against the least numerous, and force them to "divide," even if the dividend were only of misery?

Man is undoubtedly affected by his surroundings, but he is not made by them; he is not their creature. If he were he would be only an animal.

It is possible for the poorest and the most wretched to be good. There lies the true democracy.

If any one objects that you cannot prove, as physical facts are proved, that there is a God and a future life, your reply is, that those who deny lie under precisely the same disability. They, too, must go beyond the senses. They say, "We see nothing, therefore we assert that nothing is there." But you may justly ask, "Do you see a vacancy, a hiatus where that should lie which we assert?" And they can only confess that they cannot tell; their sight does not reach so far. That is the truth.

Now, even in physical investigations, the fact that a phenomenon is not observed is not held to prove

its non-occurrence; and there are sounds which we cannot hear; there are heat-rays which we cannot feel; there are worlds in space, and there are minute organisms about us, which are alike imperceptible to our senses.

We have looked somewhat into the machinery of the universe and are justly proud of the little we have found out; and yet we know scarcely the rudiments of its laws. The further science penetrates, the vaster does it see the field before it to be. The more questions are settled, the more—and not the less—as every true man of science sees and knows, remain unsolved. Scarcely is a new law discovered than further research brings into view exceptions which become, in their turn, the basis of other laws.

Do not make the serious mistake, however, of fearing the advance of science—as though it could, in some way, injure religion. All truth is necessarily of God; and no array of facts, no scientific discovery—which must concern facts and establish them—can possibly injure religious truth. There is no "conflict between religion and science." There may be a contention between false science and religion, or between false religion and science; but out of that can come only good—a clearer demonstration of the truth. While on the one hand some men of science have rashly said in their hearts, "There is no God,"

many truly religious but unscientific persons have, for their parts, opposed and denounced scientific inquiry as dangerous to religion. This opposition has done and can do no good. It is a pity, for instance, that some theologians have undertaken to oppose, and sometimes to denounce, the Darwinian theory of evolution, as though it attacked first the existence of a Creator, and, second, the possession of a spiritual nature or being by man. It does neither. It can concern itself only with physical facts and phenomena. The learned botanist, Dr. Asa Gray, himself both a true man of science and an earnest Christian, has tersely pointed out that the theory of evolution considers only "how things go on," and not at all "how things began."

Nor does the inquiry touch the higher or spiritual part of man at all. Words often do a curious mischief, and to many sincere men and women the phrase "origin of species" has seemed to denote that Mr. Darwin was considering the origin of life —which, nevertheless, is as far as possible from the truth. Mr. Darwin himself wrote, in his first book: "There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one; and that, while this planet has gone cycling on, according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning

endless forms, most beautiful and most wonderful, have been and are being evolved."

Surely the philosopher who wrote thus need not be held the enemy of our faith in God?

VII.

SCIENCE AND THE FUTURE LIFE.

The most notable effort of much of the scientific investigation of the last quarter of a century or more has been to show in how many ways the human race are like the beasts. Certainly, it has been clearly demonstrated that mankind are very closely and wonderfully related to those we call the lower animals, so that the reasonable conclusion of science is hardly to be doubted, that our bodies are, in fact, made on the same general plan as theirs, and apparently by the same Maker; that our physical part is closely related to theirs; and that it is not impossible nor even improbable—though not scientifically established—that, so far as the human body goes, it may have been developed out of the body of some ape, who, in his turn, in the course of ages, was developed out of some creature far lower in the scale of life than himself.

Now, those who believe that there is a God, and that he is the omnipotent Creator of the universe, ought not to deny that, if he wished, he was able

to carry on the work of creation by the method supposed by Mr. Darwin; or that, further, as in our belief he is also omniscient, he may in his wisdom have seen that this was, on the whole, the best way. Certainly, the thought that the Creator was able to set in motion, in the very beginning, laws which should produce the infinitely varied results we know, gives us a higher idea of his admirable genius, if that word may be used in such a connection, or of his wonderful wisdom and power, than the other notion, that he interfered anew at every step in the creation, and made now a turtle, and anon a mastodon, and still later a rhinoceros, a lion, or a monkey.

Admitting, however, the work of creation to have gone on through a single impetus, as Mr. Darwin's theory suggests, it by no means follows that God ceased thereafter to be an active being, and became a nonentity in the universe to which he had given that impetus; or that, as some one lately suggested, God, having set the work of creation agoing by the fiat of his will, thereupon committed suicide.

Nor does it follow that because we are, on the side of our bodies, so closely related to the beasts we are, therefore, only beasts, or no more than beasts, ourselves. This would be taking for granted much more than is proved, or even suggested. A person

only moderately familiar with machinery might examine two complicated engines, and seeing in both a certain number of wheels and other parts much alike, might conclude that both machines were undoubtedly intended and made exclusively for the same uses. And yet he might be entirely mistaken, and his mistake would be shown whenever the two machines were set to work, and when one was seen to do all the work of the other, *plus* other work or results of which the first was totally incapable.

So, as to men and animals, it is not difficult to show that they have a great many parts alike; that in many respects their functions are the same; that, indeed, up to a certain point the two machines are curiously and wonderfully similar—and to that extent we are strangely related to the beasts. But when we watch the operations of the two machines we are compelled to see that one does work of which the other is incapable; and what is more, that even the functions which both have in common are performed on the whole better and more effectively by man than by the beasts.

We see that the animals fulfil all their functions completely here in this life. They eat, drink, and multiply, and they seek to do no more. Some of them do not even fulfil these ends as perfectly in

that independent condition which we call their natural state as when they are under the care of man; but in their best condition not only do they do no more than this: they have no higher desires or aspirations. All that is possible to them is accomplished in their narrow span of existence here.

Now, we have only to look at mankind to see that with us matters are not only different, but enormously so. Even as to our mastery of the conditions of life on this planet and in these bodies we are superior to the beasts. Animals as well as plants are able to live only within certain limits of climate, or soil, or both, each kind having its bounds fixed, apparently, outside of which it ceases to exist. Man alone has been able not only to live but to think in all climates and on all soils, and has been able to do this violence to a law of nature which, to a degree, controls his body as it does those of the beasts, by an inborn power of protecting himself against the rigors of change. Here the one machine seems clearly to be superior to the other even in those parts which are similar. Animals make no advances in the arts of living—of physical living, I mean; they display merely a very limited, though often curious, and always interesting, power of adapting themselves to new circumstances, as where a bird changes the form of her nest because the more usual form would not

be convenient or safe for the place where she is impelled to rear her young. Man, on the other hand, unceasingly reaches forward on this line. Animals are confined to certain kinds of food—some are carnivorous, some graminivorous; man, alone, except where he has forcibly trained the cat or dog to do violence to its natural tastes, is omnivorous.

In these and many other respects man is, even as to his body, essentially abler than the beasts; but when we come to consider the qualities of his mind, here man not merely rises, as we see, above the beasts: he is, so far as that is concerned, a creature of an entirely different kind; he has faculties, powers, qualities, aspirations, which are not possessed by the animals; of which they have no trace.

The difference here is not of degree, but of kind. To return to the illustration of two machines: here we discover that the one machine, already doing better than the other the work common to the two, now does in addition work, and produces results, of which the other is totally incapable, and which is of an immeasurably higher order.

To prove that, so far as his body goes, man is only and exactly an animal, neither more nor less, could thus only make clearer to the scientific mind the extreme importance and the essential distinction of those qualities and faculties which man alone pos-

sesses, and in fact lessens the probability that he has, as to his intellectual parts, been "evolved" from the animal creation.

The splendid generalization of Darwin has dazzled and fascinated scientific men, as well it might; but no one would be readier than its author, I believe, to acknowledge that while it does not at all concern the spiritual part of man, but only his body, it does not, even as a physical theory, explain or account for all the facts of physical life; as, to take only a single instance, the various, and yet in each case apparently fixed, periods assigned by the Creator to the lives of animals, and plants as well.

Why, for instance, are some plants annuals, some perennials? Why may the oak live a thousand years, while many other plants live but a year? Why is a dog's limit of life fifteen, or, at most, and in exceptional instances, twenty years, and a parrot's a hundred? Why does a horse live but thirty or forty years, an elephant seventy or eighty, and a crow still longer? Why is the natural limit of life so varied in creatures essentially similar in structure, built on the same general plan?

But you see here, what was pointed out to you above, that the inquirer into natural phenomena is like a woodman in a boundless forest—each tree he fells only opens to him new and unsuspected vistas.

Darwin showed that individuals produce their like, with slight possible differences which may, under favoring conditions, become permanent; and for nearly a quarter of a century scientific men have been busily engaged in proving this hypothesis, and ascertaining how much ground it would cover. But Dr. Gray, himself a Darwinian, justly remarks that, after all, "the great primary law of inheritance remains a mysterious fact."

The stimulus which the publication of Mr. Darwin's first book gave to the faithful and accurate study of natural phenomena is one of the very great services he rendered to the lovers of knowledge. But some men of science begin to see that it might be useful now to look at the other side—to take equal pains to discover and record those cases and phenomena which the theory of evolution does *not* cover. In this way science might perhaps hit upon some other laws, less important, but yet important as laws, which, in fixing its eye too closely upon one law alone, it may have overlooked. Thus, the discoverer of a great river might, in the eagerness of his zeal, follow its course thousands of miles to its distant head among the mountains; nor should we blame him. But he would deserve still more of mankind, and especially of geographers, if he should later also undertake the exploration of its tributaries. And

while he might find that the Ohio, the Cumberland, the Arkansas, the Red river were, after all, but pigmy streams compared with the great Father of Waters, still, in exploring them he would have done the important work of marking the great watersheds of the continent. And when he came to the Missouri he might well stop, amazed, and wonder which of the two mighty streams at whose confluence he stood was *the* river, and which its affluent.

It now seems probable that the theory of evolution may represent the mighty Mississippi among the laws which have been set to control, in the wisdom of God, not the origin or beginning but the going on or development of things. But there may be other and tributary laws whose existence is still unsuspected, but which science will begin to look for whenever it takes its eye off the discovery which for a generation has charmed and fascinated it; when it acknowledges that evolution answers many questions, but not all, even in its legitimate domain.

You are, however, to remember that what science calls "laws" are only formulæ deduced from observation, and intended to tell us that, given certain circumstances or collocations of things, and certain results will follow. Observation has shown, for instance, that the law of gravitation, as it is called, by

which every material body tends to approach toward every other material body with a certain determinate force, is of universal application; so far as we know, on it depends the stability not of our system merely, but of the universe. But why this is so no one knows. We know, to come to lesser "laws," that among the beasts all ruminants, and they alone, have the foot cleft, and that only among this class are frontal horns found. Wide observation has shown this to be so invariable that the naturalist, seeing the imprint of a cleft foot, knows at once the details of structure of the animal which left it; and Cuvier, when he saw in a nightmare a vision of the conventional devil, exclaimed with contempt, "Horns and hoofs! No, you are not carnivorous." But why the cleft foot should be the invariable mark of a particular order of animals—why with that should go teeth, bones, digestive apparatus of a peculiar form—no one knows.

We have ascertained that certain usually solid substances melt at certain fixed temperatures—that we call a law; but we do not know why they are thus peculiarly subject to the influence of a certain, and in most cases differing, temperature. We know that almost but not entirely all fluids expand as they are made hotter, and contract as they are made colder, but we do not know why this is so. Nor do we

know why water forms one of the exceptions to this general law; although we do know that on the fact that water expands instead of contracting when it becomes ice depend many of the most important natural phenomena, and that if the contrary happened — why it should not we do not know — not only would the disintegration of rocks and other important effects in the great laboratory of nature be stopped or checked, but our planet would not even be habitable, because of immense and constantly increasing accumulations of ice in the oceans and streams, where, contracting as it formed, it would sink to the bottom and remain ice, instead of floating on the surface, to be melted by the sun's rays.

The fact that we are able to discover laws according to which the infinite variety of material objects about us is arranged and subsists shows us, however, that the universe is not a disorderly or hap-hazard aggregation of things. Order supposes an ordering mind; and the astronomer Herschel shrewdly remarked that the universe bore to him all the marks of a "manufactured article" — a product — a something which did not merely happen, but was done on purpose.

Science, far from eliminating God, proves that there must have been a God — one God — one supreme ordering mind, not several; a Creator intel-

ligent, in the sense of far-seeing—capable, as the Bible says, of seeing the end from the beginning; wise enough to foresee the remotest effects of the laws He put in operation by His will, and to choose, also, out of perhaps an infinite number of methods that one which to Him seemed best. For science has demonstrated that the universe might, in some details, at least, have been differently constituted from what it is; and therefore, that the Creator must have exercised a choice is intelligible even to such finite minds as ours.

Why God made the choice He did we do not know. Our senses are too dull even to grasp all those phenomena of nature the probability of which we are able to perceive. Our bodily senses are the modes by which the Creator has enabled us in this life to apprehend what goes on; but science has established the wonderful fact that there may be, and undoubtedly are, phenomena beyond the reach of these senses. Thus, sound vibrations of more than thirty-eight thousand strokes per second are inaudible to most human ears, though some few can detect a somewhat higher pitch. But physicists see no reason to doubt that there may be sound vibrations all about us of such rapidity as to be entirely inaudible to our ears; and it is now suspected, though not known, that to some insects these rapid vibrations, inaudible to us,

are so well apprehended as to be for them means of intercommunication. Again, there are rays at both ends of the spectrum which our senses do not directly perceive—thermal rays which are apparent to us only by help of the thermometer, because they do not give light to our eyes, but give out only heat; and at the other end color rays to which our vision is equally insensible, but whose existence is established for us by their chemical action. But science gives no reason to believe, and scientific men do not assert, that we know the absolute limit of the spectrum at either end. The range of sound and of color is, therefore, certainly much greater than we recognize through the senses.

Thus, while on the one hand we see clearly that our powers of observation are limited by the limitations of our bodily senses, on the other we just as clearly perceive, in these and other instances, that there is a world, even a physical world, beyond our ken; that the universe which we can explore with the help of our bodily senses and organs is but a part—who can tell how large or how small a part?—of the entire creation; that not only is there something beyond, but even that there may be things in our immediate presence and surroundings which are not to us known, because our bodily senses are unfitted to recognize them.

To assert, therefore, on scientific grounds, first, that there is no God, and, second, that there is no future life attainable by us, would be extremely rash, and plainly contrary to reason. It would be to argue that a vast collection of things, the most remarkable quality of which is the orderliness with which they are all arranged, is proof that they were never arranged at all, but came about by mere haphazard. And it would be to argue that because even in physical inquiries we must acknowledge that there are objects and phenomena beyond our perception, therefore we are to disbelieve in a future life for our spiritual parts, highly probable though unprovable, unless we have proof submitted to our bodily senses.

On the contrary, scientific investigation, the farther it reaches out, only makes the existence of God and the survival of our souls after the death of the body the more reasonable hypothesis. That the material universe should have had a Creator, an intelligent, foreseeing, and planning constructor, all science shows to be, at the least, very much more probable than that so orderly, harmoniously acting, and wonderful a machine should have come about by mere chance. That the Creator, having set this vast and complicated machinery in motion, should then have abdicated or committed suicide, is so violent and im-

probable a supposition, that you have a right to demand positive proof before entertaining it. Finally, that we have desires, capacities for knowledge and enjoyment and usefulness which our present physical life is greatly inadequate to enable us to fulfil, while it is by no means a positive proof of a future life, is certainly, so far as it goes, an indication; and we may rightfully require those who deny the future life to account for these desires and capacities, and put upon them the burden of proving their assertion; because the probability is strongly against them.

If we find the theory of a future life entirely in harmony with the known laws of our being; if it is furthermore required for the welfare, and even the existence, of human society on this planet; if it conforms with the other phenomena which we observe in ourselves and in nature, or at least if it offends none, we may safely and even scientifically maintain that this theory shall be held true—until it is disproved.

But observe that those who deny are the very men who admit that no proof, in the sense demanded in physical investigations, is attainable by them on this subject. They have no evidence to produce on their side.

VIII.

THE LIMITS OF SPECULATION

If the world was made by God, instead of happening by chance, we may, I think, believe that He had some purpose or design in the making of it. What we have ourselves of Him in regard to the general creation, there is a disposition in the human mind to hold also of details. The animals live their lives without thought of such *whys* and *wherefores*. The pig contentedly eats his acorns, and does not even look up into the oak to see whence his supplies are dropping; and a cow at pasture does not trouble herself about the origin of the grass; and if she thought about it at all, which she does not, would no doubt be quite satisfied that it was made for her to eat; or, to put the matter in the language of philosophers, that to be eaten by a cow was the "final cause" of the grass.

If you should assert that the real "final cause" of the grass was to be turned by the cow into milk and butter for your own use, you would go only a short step further than the cow, in precisely the same direction; and you might not be any nearer a right

guess at the purposes of the Creator. But the fact is, the mind of man is prone to such guesses and speculations, and this is one of the particulars in which we are very widely distinguished from the beasts.

We strive to penetrate the Divine intentions.

It is as well to do this modestly—remembering the vast difference between the Creator's infinite intelligence and our own finite minds. But because a child is pretty certain to reason wrongly and inconclusively concerning the actions of its parents we need not forbid it to reason at all. Nor, on the other hand, if a boy should conclude that he could not comprehend the reasons which controlled the acts of his father would he be warranted in asserting that the father had no reasons or purpose at all.

Undoubtedly the discussion of the Divine purpose is apt to mislead us, and is often futile; and we need not find fault with some philosophers and men of science if they are as irritable at the mention of "final causes" as a bull at the exhibition of a red rag. They assert that the argument of design is only a vicious reasoning in a circle; and some modern men of science profess to show us that there is no firm ground at all for the ascription of purpose to the Creator, if there was a Creator; that the eye, for instance, was not made to see with, because, as they assert, it came about by a course of slow develop-

ment of optic nerves and other parts out of the vesicular structure of some originally non-seeing animal. They tell us that the first crude germ of vision was a nerve in some zoophite which chanced to be affected by or was susceptible to light rays; that the advantage in the struggle for life gained by the creature possessing even the dimmest vision was so great that it was better able to escape destruction than its non-seeing companions, and that thus the power or faculty of vision was preserved with its possessor, and in some unexplained way developed and perfected in the course of ages.

Now, if you will think a moment you will see that this, after all, is only an account of how these philosophers suppose the eye to have come about; and if they could scientifically establish the truth of their supposition this would by no means prove that the Creator had no design in the matter, or that, in fact, the purpose of the eye, its final cause, was not to see with. If a carpenter should explain to you the various processes by which he had evolved a chair out of a tree, which had first to grow, then to be cut down, then to be sawed into lumber, parts of which were finally, with a good deal more detail, fashioned into a chair, all this would not bear upon the question whether or no the "final cause" of the chair was to be sat on.

God need not have made a nerve susceptible to light rays. He need not have made this susceptible nerve capable, in the course of ages, of becoming the perfect eye with which we see. To describe to us the process by which the eye was formed obviously does not tell us anything whatever of the purpose or design of him who caused its formation.

Mr. Darwin, who never goes too far in his reasoning, asks, "May we not believe that [by gradual development] a living optical instrument might be thus formed, as superior to one of glass as the works of the Creator are to those of man?" You notice that he does not exclude design, but, on the contrary, plainly includes it. He argues only that the designer, God, preferred a particular way of forming the eye; and on that matter you may without harm take the knowledge and research of so great and careful an investigator as Darwin for your guide.

There is, however, some ground for the scientific man's hostility to the argument from design. It has often been carried to extremes; it has sometimes barred the way of scientific research; and we ought not to forget that there is a certain impertinence in our readiness to explain the meaning and intentions of the Creator. That the eye was made to enable us to see seems to us clear enough; that our hands are marvellously fitted by intricate struct-

ure to do the work to which we put them is undeniable. But there are what anatomists and botanists call "functionless organs," which, in the animals and plants which possess them, have no apparent uses, and which speak to us rather of a distant past, or perhaps of a more distant future, than of the present. And while we may reasonably strive to discover, also, the purpose of their present occurrence, a modest distrust of our own limited powers should make us cautious where we are dealing with infinite wisdom and power.

It was a laughable instance of misapprehension when a child admired the wisdom of Providence in causing large rivers to flow past great cities—for we all see that the cities were subsequent to the rivers, and man only took advantage of what he found created to his hand. It might be to little more purpose for you to argue that God made rivers to facilitate internal commerce and communication between nations. It is enough for us that we find them useful for this important end. To recur to the case of water, of which I spoke in the last chapter: we see clearly enough that on the fact that water expands in freezing, contrary to a very general though not universal law, depends to a large extent the habitableness of our planet. I think we may reasonably admire the wisdom of the Creator

in giving this somewhat exceptional law to water; and we may even suppose that he took this way, out of a number which he might have used, to make the earth habitable and pleasant to such creatures as it contains.

But if, now, a plumber should come in and assume that water had been caused to expand in freezing in order that he might have the profit of mending bursted water-pipes, you would justly regard this as a very silly deduction.

It is possible and probable that the Creator had not one but many purposes in view in any one of the laws he established; that of these purposes some were present, others remote; some evident, others recondite; and that while the attempt to define for ourselves his designs in every phenomenon we observe about us is a tempting intellectual exercise, it must be, for the most part, sterile of results: because a finite mind strives in vain to penetrate the secrets of his infinite intelligence.

When we come to ask WHY, we run our heads at once against so many impenetrable mysteries that the wisest draw back with awe, and wait patiently for the clearer insight we may hope for in another life, where we shall be disencumbered of our bodies —those organs which we may there discover to have been to us more of a hinderance than even a help

to knowledge. In these matters also, as Paul finely says, "Here we see as in a glass darkly, but there face to face"—here we see dimly, as the reflection in a mirror of an object lying behind us; but there by direct vision.

Here we see more and more of the wonderful way in which things go on—but, so far, we have not got even the faintest glimpse of how things began. We discover some of the laws, as we call them, in obedience to which the universe became and remains an orderly and harmoniously working machine; but we know absolutely nothing of WHY these laws are as they are, much less why they are not otherwise.

These limitations of our knowledge, which yet do not exclude us from knowing that there is an infinite field of investigation before us, are justly held to give us a promise of continued existence—to make a life beyond the grave more probable than that we should perish with our bodies. If we could know all here, we might reasonably apprehend that this life, thus filled and rounded, was all that remains to us. As for the lower animals, which fulfil all their functions in this life, no other is necessary: so it might be with us higher beings, if we also, in this life, could consciously fulfil all our functions, and complete our possibilities.

IX.

MORAL AS WELL AS PHYSICAL LAWS.

We speak of moral as well as physical laws; but while all created things are alike and peremptorily subject to those general rules which we call physical laws, man is the only creature who is subject to moral laws. The beasts have neither morality nor immorality; they simply follow their impulses. It would be as absurd to talk of an immoral horse or lion as of an immoral oak or elm. To man alone is given the choice between good and evil. We speak sometimes, to be sure, of a thieving cat, or dog, or raven, but we do not apply the term in the same sense as to a man; nor do we hold an animal to the same responsibility.

Moral laws appear for us to have come in with the creation of man. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the Bible tells us, grew in Paradise; it appeared there simultaneously with the first human pair. Whether you take this Bible statement literally, or regard it as a picturesque and poetical statement, it is nevertheless true—just as

true as that other Bible generalization, that "in the sweat of his face shall man eat his bread," or as hundreds of equally striking and deeply significant truths with which it is filled.

You consider a physical or natural law established when all the phenomena which it should affect are duly affected by it, so far as our experiments can develop this fact. We hold the law of gravitation to be established, for instance, because research and experiment have shown that the smallest stone is no no more nor less subject to it than the largest planet.

But, setting aside the moral law as revealed and enforced upon us in the Scriptures, how are you to determine what is right and what is wrong? Murder, for instance, the first crime, the first offence against the moral law of the commission of which we have any account—murder, you say, is undoubtedly wrong. But how can you prove this? Consider for a moment. Why should you not kill a person who stands in the way of the object you have at heart—of your success in some plan of life, your rival in love, or in ambition, or in business, and likely to be your successful rival? A single life stands between you and your most cherished object in life—why not destroy it? why not kill the man—poison him secretly, let us say—and thus attain your object? Leave out of view, please, the dread of discovery,

and of disgrace and punishment; for we are now discussing the question whether there ought to be disgrace and punishment at all for murder. Whether, instead of secretly poisoning your rival, you should not, if you are strong enough, openly knock him on the head?

Why should you not kill him, and thus insure success?

Or, to put the question on a broader base, why should we not kill the maimed, the crippled, the helpless, and the criminal classes? A pauper or a tramp is a useless creature—he produces nothing, and subsists idly on the labors and earnings of others, who are the poorer for his continued life. The maimed, the crippled, the deaf and dumb, the blind, the insane, those who are unable to earn their own subsistence, and are a charge upon their friends or on society, and often a heavy and grievous burden—why should we not kill them? The criminal class, the depredators on society, who make our lives uneasy and rob us of our hardly-earned savings: why should we not kill them? We poison dogs which have contracted a passion for the blood of sheep. We trap foxes and weasels which invade our hen-roosts. But the burglar or pick-pocket is only a more noxious creature than the sheep-killing dog; the swindler or forger is only a more able and more

dangerous weasel. Why do we build prisons and reformatories for these people, and maintain hospitals and asylums for the helpless class?

You will, perhaps, say that such humanity is necessary to the existence of society. But this is not certain; and if it were, why should you care about society? If you are strong, why should you trouble yourself about the weak, the helpless, or suffer yourself to be troubled by the vicious? A child is born into the world weakly or deformed; why should not the parents kill it, and thus save themselves from a painful and costly charge—a burden lasting they cannot tell how many years, and entailing very great deprivations and discomfort? An aged person lies bedridden, and sure to die after a while; why not save a great deal of trouble and annoyance by killing him at once? A thousand soldiers lie wounded on the field, and the care of them exposes the commander to the loss of the campaign; he cannot pursue or he cannot evade the enemy, because these helpless men cumber his movements. Why not kill them? Why hazard success, fame, glory, perhaps the cause for which he is fighting, by stopping to dress their wounds, to house them comfortably, to care for their recovery?

Human laws, you will say, forbid such barbarities. But human laws are only the enactments of a tem-

porary majority; they are constantly changing and changed. Why should they not be entirely made over in the plain interests of the general peace and prosperity? Consider how secure you would feel if all the criminal classes, great and small, were hanged up out of the way; how much less your taxes, and how much greater your prosperity and that of society at large would be, if all the paupers and other helpless people were quietly smothered, and we could sell the jails, hospitals, and asylums, to be turned into summer hotels and watering-places.

Society would go to pieces, you repeat. That is by no means certain; but if it did, what need you care for society? You have a strong desire for happiness; is it not rank injustice that "society" should impose rules which at every step, almost, interfere with your pursuit of happiness? Why should you suffer such injustice? and not you alone, but all those members of society who, like you, are strong, able, shrewd, energetic, and, so being, have the keener desire for those things which seem to you and them to constitute good-fortune, happiness?

When I speak to you of poisoning, of infanticide, of killing off the paupers, the maimed, blind, and deaf and dumb, of hanging up the whole criminal class, and closing asylums and reformatories, I shock you; but let us follow the matter a little further.

A man and woman marry; they have children; the man tires of his wife, who has lost her beauty and freshness to him in caring for the children and the household. He sees other women who please him more; or he feels that but for these family burdens he might rapidly acquire a fortune, or lead an easier or a more varied life, or even make a great career. Why should he not please himself? Or, on the other hand, the woman tires of her humdrum life of unceasing care; her husband neglects or no longer pleases her; she sees another man who appears to her a more agreeable companion. Why should she not abandon husband and children and please herself?

We are coming now, observe, to a less unusual instance. You are less shocked, but only because the case is not so uncommon in your newspaper reading, where a husband abandons his wife, or a wife her husband; and there has been a strong pressure, for many years, upon law-making bodies to make divorce easier, and not without success in many of our States, and in some European countries. That the two sexes should consort together at their pleasure, and without such bonds and restraints as the moral law imposes, and as legal regulations in almost all states still provide, is the contention of a considerable number of men and women here and

in Europe, who have argued for their view in books and public addresses. Why are they not right? If you object that on their plan society would go to pieces, they reply that it would not; and if it did, they ask why are they bound to be unhappy as individuals in order to benefit society—an aggregation of people, that is to say, whom they do not know, and for whom they do not care?

Even this latter instance, however, offends you. It is not usual to see men and women abandon their family ties; and disgust hinders you from considering this case on its merits, so to speak. Let me take another, still commoner. A shrewd, capable, and determined man of business—a merchant, let us say—sees that certain competitors stand between him and wealth. He does not kill them, because it is still the fashion to hang people for murder; but he ruins them. One after the other he brings them to bankruptcy, and so gathers into his own hands the whole commerce which had engaged them and maintained them. Here, at last, we have a case which human laws do not touch, and which is common enough. What do you think of it?

You call him selfish and unscrupulous, and you detest him. But why should you? It was by the use of superior cunning that he gained the object nearest his heart—great wealth. Why should he not

do this? It was necessary to his happiness to be very wealthy; or, at least, that was his belief. Why should he let foolish and weak scruples stand in the way of his desires? He did not know the men he ruined; why should he regard them? "Live and let live!" you exclaim; but he replies, "All baggage at the risk of the owner;" and why is he not right? Undoubtedly his brutal selfishness violates the moral law; but why should he observe the moral law? There is no penalty here, in this life, for its breach.

Society, you say, will go to pieces if such mere self-seeking becomes the rule, and if, to alter an old rhyme, "He may take who has the cunning, and he must keep who can;" and you add that every individual example of such conduct is debasing to the young and the morally weak who see it. But he replies, "What do I care for society? I want wealth, and the honors and predominance which much money gives. I care nothing about society. 'Every man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost.' Besides," he adds, "it is all twaddle about society going to pieces. Society can be kept together by soldiers with the modern arms of precision. When I see society attempting to go to pieces I call loudly for the Seventh Regiment, and I notice that society settles down at once."

If this life of the body with its desires and neces-

sities is all we have to live, the question of morals is certainly one open to every man's decision on his own views of what will make him happiest; and he is entitled to judge for himself. If he is strong enough he may destroy or subdue all the weak about him, for it is the happiness of the strong man to exercise his strength and power. If he is ambitious enough he may, to secure his own desires, or to wreak his own revenges, destroy the state of which he is a part, for to the ambitious man his own aims are more precious than the good of his fellow-men. If he is cunning enough he may ruin all his competitors in business, and thus build up a vast fortune. If there is no future life for us, self-restraint, self-denial, are mere follies; Hampdens and Washingtons are visionaries and dreamers; Cæsars and Napoleons are the real men.

Those who deny the existence of God and a future life strive in vain to justify the restraints on the passions and propensities of mankind imposed by what we call moral laws. The ablest and most logical of them seek refuge in the assertion that we are to sacrifice our inclinations for the benefit of some future society; they draw for us pleasing pictures of the perfection and happiness at which the human race may arrive in some distant period, if more and more of us can only be persuaded to sacrifice our own

comfort and happiness in order that our remote descendants five or six thousand years hence may have easier and happier lives.

But the argument of such a vague, distant, and general benefit is capable of attracting only those few who are already, naturally or by training, inclined to be good. It has no force upon the minds of the selfish strong, or the selfish weak. It does not control the strong man's will, or tempt him to hold his hand against the weak. Why should he or what does he care for future and distant generations of men? He has strong passions, the gratification of which is necessary to his happiness here—and he is assured that there is no life for him beyond this of the body. This is, therefore, his only opportunity for enjoyment, for gratification, for happiness. The sentiment of pity may stay his purpose, but he will not be detained from working his will upon his fellow-creatures by consideration of how his actions may influence the condition of society in distant ages. We see in many instances that such a strong man is not even greatly restrained by the thought of his own immediate and closest friends.

As to the weak—the great mass who have little or no hope of wealth, or fame, or power—deprive them of the future life, and they must seek their consolation or reward here, in the flesh-pots of Egypt—in

the "bread and shows" of the Roman multitude; in amusements and distractions of a merely or mainly animal kind—in the selfish search after bodily comfort and ease.

We are forced to include the future life—the life of the soul beyond the grave—if we desire to justify to ourselves or to others the supreme restraining authority of moral laws, on which, observe, all just and beneficent human laws are founded. "Thou shalt not kill," says the law of Moses; and as though foreseeing that the children of Israel, long corrupted and debased in pagan bondage, needed something much more forcible and impressive than a mere appeal for social order, this and the other Commandments were delivered amid the thunders of Sinai, and as the imperative commands of God. "Thou shalt not kill," says the law of Moses, and thus guards the weak against the strong, and enables the foundation of a human society. But "Thou shalt not call thy brother a fool," says Jesus, recalling our attention to the higher purpose of self-restraint—to the necessity of guarding and training our spiritual part for the future life.

Observe that Jesus, with that divine and searching wisdom which was His alone, struck at the vices which corrupt the spirit—malice, envy, hypocrisy, anger, hatred, all forms of selfishness. "Thou shalt

not call thy brother a fool"—not because that hurts him, but because it hurts *you;* because it gratifies and fosters somewhat in your own soul debasing to it, and unfitting it for higher things. So, envy may not affect your neighbor, but it corrodes your own soul. So, hypocrisy, it has been said, is "the homage which vice pays to virtue;" it has sometimes been described as even a social virtue; but Jesus never ceased to denounce the hypocrites—the "whited sepulchres, fair and smooth without, but full of rottenness within."

"It is more blessed to give than to receive," said He, again; and if "the poor we have always with us," as undoubtedly we shall have until society is Christianized, it is that our own hearts may be softened, and our love and sympathy kept alive by helping them. Always, in every way, He appealed to the inner man, and required that the soul, the immortal part, be cleansed and kept alive to all good and high thoughts and things. For the externals he cared so little that his life seemed scandalous to the "scribes and pharisees." Bodily comfort, ease, enjoyment he made little of, though he was by no means an ascetic. But as He came to deliver to us the doctrine of a future and eternal life, as He saw with His divine eyes clearly the relations of this life to the other, so He ever insisted on those things

which are needed to prepare our spirits for that other life in which we are to live without the bonds, and also without the help, of the body. Therefore He taught self-restraint, self-denial, the curbing and rooting out of evil passions and desires, the denial to the body of the gratifications of our senses, because He saw that thus only can we train our spirits for the higher life beyond the grave.

Thus, His teaching, though some found it "hard," was utterly reasonable. It urged, only in a vastly more important field and aspect, what a thoughtful father impresses upon his son going to college, or to a trade: "Use this opportunity to prepare yourself for the real life which is to come to you hereafter —after this period of privation and exertion. Deny yourself now, in these student or apprentice years, that you may hereafter be a man amongst men."

But, leave out the future life which was the constant burden of His speech and thoughts, and the social theory of Jesus is only foolishness—an overwrought sentimentalism as it has been called in our days by men who, rejecting the future life, naturally and logically reject, also, the admonitions for the conduct of our present and bodily lives which Jesus delivered.

Reject the future life beyond the grave, eliminate it from our thoughts and beliefs, and what we call

goodness becomes merely a "matter of choice"—a thing to be determined for society by the vote of the majority for the time being, and for the individual by what happens to be most to his taste.

If you urge that, nevertheless, "goodness," self-sacrifice, love to the neighbor, restraint of the physical passions and appetites, are so necessary to society that without these that could not long endure, this is only to say that, in the Divine Providence, that which is best for the individual beyond the grave is best for the aggregate we call society here. But consider what a strange confusion in the Divine thought it would argue—what a singular break in the general harmony we should discover, if, for instance, honesty were not the best policy in this life, but only in the next!

X.

THE BIBLE AS A BOOK.

Among books it is from the Bible that we draw the most of our ideas of God and the future life. It is a great collection of books, some very ancient, some less so, but all admitted by critics to be of great age, and among the oldest writings preserved to our days.

I should like you to read the Bible not merely as a book of devotion, but as you would other books of the highest interest and importance. Like other ancient writings, though not more but rather less so, its style in some of the books will seem to you often strange, and sometimes dry. But I notice that those who have most carefully and even critically studied it are the most positive in their praises of its extraordinary literary excellence.

If you read it with the intelligent curiosity which it deserves, you will discover that it has astonishing merits of many kinds—literary, historical, poetical; and that there is no part of it which does not deserve and reward a careful study, aside entirely from

its importance as a guide to our moral or spiritual lives. This has been the opinion of the greatest poets and the most deeply cultivated minds in all countries, and their judgment is worthy of your respect. No thoughtful person, if he regards only the affairs of the present life, can even glance superficially over this great collection without a feeling of admiration and wonder; and when you hear a person speak slightingly or contemptuously of the Bible you may safely set him down as an ignoramus.

To speak only of superficials, nowhere in literature do we find such biographies as are in the Bible: memoirs giving such vivid traits of life; relating with such impartial hand the evil as well as the good which appeared in the man, and leaving you with such a conviction of the accuracy of the author, and of the genuineness of the character portrayed. In the lives of Moses and Aaron, of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, of David and Solomon, though these were heroes and great men, founders and rulers, there is no attempt in the Bible narrative to deify them, or to conceal their faults. The Bible "whitewashes" nobody. You see that these were men of force, power, sometimes of genius; but along with their great or good deeds the Scripture story gives you their weaknesses, foibles, faults, sins, and presents to you men, and not impossible or improbable beings.

There is nowhere in literature such an admirable collection of biographies as we find in the Old Testament.

The poetry of the Bible has instructed and delighted the most refined and critical minds in all ages, and particularly in modern times when the critical faculty has had its greatest development. There is scarcely a great poet in the last three centuries, in our own or other languages, who has not taken some Scripture event or some suggestion from its pages, as the basis of a poem; and you need to have but a cursory acquaintance with English poetry to know that if you could eliminate from it all that is founded upon or drawn from the Bible, you would rob it of very many of its noblest poems, and leave a blank which nothing that remains would fill. The Psalms, which touch and awaken all the moods and experiences of our lives; the Book of Job, the song of Miriam, the song of Deborah, many pages in the Prophets, not to speak of other parts, abound in poetry of the highest order, and in narratives which touch the heart and stir the feelings by beauty of language and elevation of thought, and by their appeal to the common experience of mankind in misfortune, disappointment, sorrow, or in great joy and gladness.

The Bible is not a book of science; but any of

you who have a taste for natural history will find that many of the Bible writers were admirably close observers and skilful recorders of natural phenomena.

In history no book in all our libraries offers you so large and instructive a view of the rise, the growth and prosperity, the glory, and then the decadence and fall of nations, as the Bible. In the earlier books of the Old Testament you may see how Moses, a man of the greatest genius the world has seen, with admirable and almost impossible patience, gave himself to the making of a nation out of a horde of ignorant and degraded freedmen; with what constant and irritating obstacles he had to contend in his endeavor to make men out of a people who had been sunk in slavery; and with what wonderful wisdom and zeal he persevered in their training during forty tedious and vexatious years. If you read with sufficient intelligence you will marvel to find Moses, in that age of the world, developing a system of political economy to which the minds of many thoughtful men even now turn back for instruction and hope; and not only this, but to find him laying down minute rules for the daily conduct of life—rules regarding the administration of justice, for cleanliness and order, food, raiment, and drink, for the protection of the poor, of prisoners and

slaves, for the conduct of men towards men, and towards women—a mass of sanitary, physiological, and social regulations, very many of which we should be the better, in our modern society, for re-adopting and observing.

If you have given any thought to statesmanship, or have read history with even moderate attention, the Bible story of Moses will present him to you as by far the wisest and greatest statesman of whom we have any record; as one of the few very great men our race has known; and the greatest of them all, because his wisdom and the labors of his long life were given unselfishly to the liberation of a degraded slave population, and their elevation in the scale of manhood and civilization to the rank of a nation which remained compact, prosperous, and happy so long as it adhered to the laws he established.

Solon and Lycurgus were famous law-givers among the ancients; but the laws of Moses, in the opinion of the ablest thinkers of modern days, far excel theirs in scope and merit, and especially in humanity. Nowhere in the histories which have come down to us do we find the ruler of an ancient people so humane, so careful of the poor, the weak, and defenceless; nowhere are there such simple yet admirable devices for the maintenance of a general

equality of condition in society. No law-giver or law-maker of ancient or modern days has shown so keen an appreciation of the importance of the necessity of securing to every family of a nation a share in its soil. Nowhere do we find such simple and yet effective checks placed upon selfishness and that greed for accumulation which in our own days has forced itself upon the attention of many wise statesmen and philosophers as a grave danger to society. No student of political economy or of statesmanship in our days can neglect to examine with care the constitution of that Jewish confederation of which Moses laid the corner-stone in the wilderness, and which he left Joshua, his principal general or military aid, to finally establish according to the regulations previously laid down by himself.

Nor should you overlook the fact that Joshua, a military ruler, who led his people to conquest in a time when military rulers were accustomed to misuse their power to establish a despotic and personal government, patriotically respected the constitution of the Jewish commonwealth, and, like our own Washington, sought only the welfare of his people, and not his own aggrandizement—a remarkable and noble example of self-denial and public spirit in those days which has had few imitators since.

If you turn to the Book of Proverbs you discover

a mass of shrewd and happy generalizations on human life and society, which show the closest observation of character. And in all parts of the Bible you meet with statements and narratives which, were they discovered in other books, or now first made by writers of our own day, would be hailed as marvels of genius or remarkable insight.

I would like you to recognize in the Bible not merely a book of moral precepts. It is a great collection of writings filled with lessons and suggestions instructive to the student in many of the most important branches of modern investigation and inquiry. There is scarcely any subject to which you may give thought, barring only the exact sciences, in which some part of these ancient writings will not be useful and important to you.

XI.

THE MYSTERY OF PAIN.

In the Old Testament the affairs of the present life are the most prominent. In the New Testament, and particularly in the Gospels, the concerns of this life seem to fade away before our eyes into comparative insignificance.

In the Old Testament prosperity, predominance, happiness here below, are held out as the rewards of right living and of obedience to God, and the summit of felicity is when the aged grandsire sees his descendants to the third and fourth generation playing about his knees; when his cattle graze on a thousand hills, and his sons and daughters are powerful in the land: "Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them; they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate."

In the New Testament these earthly joys and rewards become dim to our vision, which is turned by Jesus with gentle persistence toward that other, spiritual and immortal, life of which He never ceased to explain, in discourses and parables, the supreme importance and real relations.

It is as though a child or youth, for some time drilled in geography, should one day begin the study of astronomy. As he considered the heavens, with their immensity of infinite space, their numberless and unnumbered worlds and systems of worlds, it would dawn upon his mind that this planet of ours, which had seemed to him hitherto the centre and circumference of life, is but an atom of the vast universe. Not an insignificant or an unimportant atom by any means; but his wider outlook would show him for the first time the true relation of things, and that this habitation of ours, wonderful, various, and beautiful as it is, is not all. So Jesus "came not to destroy, but to fulfil the law." He taught us not to despise but only to properly value the earthly life.

In the New Testament we are "as those who seek a country," pilgrims—temporary sojourners, that is to say—in this life, and looking for another and a better; using this present time to prepare ourselves for that higher life in which the promise is of peace; rest, that is to say, from the struggle with bodily passions and infirmities, relief from pain, from sorrow, from disappointment and injustice, from the mean toil involved in supporting the body, and in providing for it what it cries out for in various directions. Rest; but not in idleness, for that is no

rest; but in the enjoyments which must come, as you can see, to a life relieved from sordid necessities and more sordid struggles; from the uncertainties and sorrows which oppress us because of our short sight and inability to comprehend the real purpose of God and the real bearing and drift of events. "For now we see through a glass darkly," Paul finely says, "but there face to face," meaning that here we see only as one dimly perceives the reflection in a mirror of objects which lie behind him—but there beyond we shall see with the direct vision of our eyes.

In the Old Testament the state predominates over the individual. Moses aimed to establish a nation —though with a wisdom before which that of the Cæsars and Napoleon is dimmed, and which was far beyond his own age of the world, he showed the most minute care for the prosperity and happy development of the individual, not less than for the mere security of society. To speak in the political slang of our day, Moses was furthest from being an Imperialist. He founded a truly Democratic Commonwealth; and you may find the earliest traces of what we now call local self-government and decentralization of power—the opposite of Imperialism—in the form of government he elaborated.

But in the New Testament the individual becomes

of the first importance. "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," said Jesus; not as though government or society were the supreme object, but because these are temporary and subsidiary phenomena, incidents which we are not to allow to disturb our personal lives; therefore He added, "and to God the things that are God's." And He rebuked personal ambition and desire for predominance among His disciples, saying, "Whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be the servant to all."

In the New Testament Jesus "brought life and immortality to light," and made plain that as this life is but a training school, a place of preparation for the other, the eternal life, so we are to use it not for the accumulation of the things valued by the body, which is temporary and perishes; not to gain wealth, or honor, or predominance, or to gratify our passions and desires, but to check and curb these, and to impose on ourselves that course which our reason must tell us will best fit us to enjoy a life outside of and divested from the body.

But to do this requires Faith, as Jesus incessantly repeated. We must believe that there is a future and spiritual life, because we cannot in the scientific and accurate sense know it; and we must hold this faith as an imperative guide and light of our footsteps.

It is not easy, this life of preparation, as He said. We are fond of permanence; nothing in this life is so disagreeable to us as to realize its temporary nature. We live in tents when we long to live in everlasting habitations in this world. To live contentedly a life of self-denial, an overpowering impression and belief in the future life is absolutely necessary; for, to make ourselves fit for that spiritual life, you can easily see, is to hold the good of this life cheap, and to remember always that all that belongs to the body, all that is meant by success, all that we call ambition, the desire to excel, to rule, to make ourselves more fortunate, more happy, more comfortable than others, has no relation to the future life. We are to do our duties: to go whither duty to our fellow-men leads us, leaving results to God.

Hence that deep saying of Jesus to the rich man who asked him, "Good master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" All the Commandments he had observed from his youth. "Then Jesus beholding him, loved him, and said unto him, 'One thing thou lackest; go thy way, sell whatever thou hast, give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come take up the cross and follow me.'" But the poor rich man "was sad at that saying and went away grieved, for he had great possessions;" and he could not bear to divest himself

of the predominance and the bodily prosperity and respect these secured to him.

Are we, then, bound to observe a vow of poverty? To live the true life here must we be ascetics? and were the old barefooted Dominicans the only candidates for eternal life?

It is not so written: but that we are not to use our lives for self-seeking; that we are not to labor for personal success, but for the service of our fellow-men; that we are to accept and use rightly, with moderation and self-denial, that return for our toil and skill which shall come to us without our eager seeking. "The shoe to whom it fits" is a cynical saying, by which selfish and unscrupulous men have endeavored to justify their seizure of power and wealth; but in the order of society the shoe will go to him it fits, without his seeking; and while you may wear it with honor—but not without care and anxiety too, if it comes to you—you are not to seek after it, to scheme for it, to grab it. The cares of this world are not to absorb us, or draw our attention from the view of the other life.

Surely, if there is another life, this must be the true theory of the present.

Hence, too, that other deep saying of Jesus: "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful, and

Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her."

Now observe, once more, that the conduct imposed on us by Jesus is necessary not merely to fit us for the life beyond the body; it is also that course by which we may best serve our fellow-men and society here. It may not make us, as individuals, the most successful, the most eminent, the most powerful. It may lead the man through many sorrows and disappointments. It is certain to impose on him irksome restraints. But, however humble or however exalted he may be, living this Christian life will put him in harmony with those laws on which society is founded, and will make his life beneficent to others.

Thus Jesus gives us, in His teachings and in His life—in that theory of life which He urged upon mankind—the needed key to the mystery of our creation. He solves for us this secret. Given the continued existence of the individual human soul beyond the body and beyond the grave, and all mysteries are made clear, and all creation becomes harmonious, which otherwise was but "sweet bells jangled." On the one hand we see a justification for those social laws which impose restraints on the individual for the security and benefit of the aggregate—laws which otherwise have no permanence or

sound base, but are exposed to constant attack from individual or combined selfishness or desire. On the other, we may perceive the Divine purpose, the loving wisdom of a loving Father in the least toward accidents of our individual lives, and see that to have an intelligent purpose which, leaving out the future life, would become but the strangest of confusions in a world otherwise, and, but for our own living in it, in every particular singularly reasonable, lawful, and harmonious.

For, if you will consider the Creation, you will find there is but one disturbing element in it—Man. He alone, by his will, modifies the course of nature. He alone, of created things, is capable of disturbing—even though but to a limited degree—the order of nature. His voice alone breaks the great silence.

Mill, in one of the saddest books ever written by a great philosopher—his "Three Essays on Religion"—sets down in that lucid style of which he was master the grievances of our bodily lives, and reasons that God cannot be a being of infinite goodness, and at the same time of infinite power, else he would not have permitted pain and grief, which make up, as Mill felt, and as all men and women are forced to feel, so great a part of our lives. There must have been two Gods—one a good, the

other an evil spirit, with co-equal powers, he thinks, to account for these phenomena.

Undoubtedly, if there is no future life, Mill was right, and there are either two Gods or none. It is a reasonable conclusion; and Mill's argument only shows how incoherent and absurd a phenomenon, in an otherwise well-regulated universe, is the life of man, on any other theory than that which continues his life beyond the grave.

We do not comprehend the ways of God—but how should we? We cannot see with His eyes; we are incapable of appreciating even very many of the minor phenomena of the life about us; and the mere thought of eternity, of time without end, of space without bounds, and of wisdom without limit, which must be His who sees the end from the beginning—the mere thought of these things eludes the grasp of our minds, and we cannot make them ours.

Is this strange or unreasonable? Have I not, in like manner, seen some of you, when you were small children, sitting in a corner gloomily reasoning with yourselves over the strange and incomprehensible perversity, the needless and despotic cruelty, the unreasonable hatefulness of your parents in denying you some pleasure, or punishing you with what seemed to you cruel severity for some misconduct? Have I not seen your eyes flash, and known that

your little hearts burned with fierce indignation, at what you believed to be irritating oppression, by your parents, of your smaller brothers and sisters? Your slightly developed intelligence could not be made to appreciate the reasons which moved your parents, nor the good they sought to bring to you when they imposed self-denial or insisted on obedience. But as you emerged into the broader experience and larger life of grown youth you saw and acknowledged, often with wonder, and always with gratitude, the wisdom, the prudent foresight, the loving care of your dear mother; and no quality of hers now, when you see things "face to face," so wins your love and grateful devotion as the memory of the wise, firm hand which, always in love, but often in sorrow and suffering to herself, insisted, restrained, forbade, denied, or punished. How often has she felt in her innermost heart, as she dealt with you, the force of that plaintive cry of Jesus, "Oh ye of little faith!"

Nor does any wise mother fail to learn, out of her experience with little children, how vain are all her laws and her loving care, to give them the true development of men and women. After all her admonitions she sees that experience is their needed teacher, and that when it has once burned its fingers that does more to keep a child away from the fire than the most persistent care and commands of the

nurse. The boy who is obliged to make his own sled may not have as pretty a sled as his fellow, but he is, as we say, "more of a boy"—he is an abler boy than the other who went to the shop and bought one with his father's money. He is an abler boy than he would have been had his father, the carpenter, made the sled for him.

Pain, grief, toil, disappointment of our wishes and hopes in childhood, you plainly see, were necessary to your manly and womanly development and fitness for a broader life. The boy who is "coddled" by his parents becomes what you call a "Miss Nancy," and grows into a selfish, cowardly, and useless man. Now, if we are to have a still higher and broader life beyond the grave, is it not reasonable to believe that all we suffer here may be and should be in like manner but a means toward our development for this higher life? Do not pain, and grief, and disappointed hopes become to our minds reasonable parts of an education for that life—and very important parts? May we not hold that these phenomena do not disturb but rather are needed to complete the general harmony?

If this life were all that remains for us, then, indeed, we might justly complain. But, in that case, complaint would be so futile and useless that we should cease to reason; for you must see that, leav-

ing out the consideration of a future life, there can be no philosophy so sterile as that of Mill, speculating about two Gods of coequal powers and opposite wills. If this life is all for us, what matter whether there are two or two thousand Gods? We cannot scale Olympus—let us "eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die"—or, to put the same thought in modern commercial language, "every man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost."

XII.

THE LIMIT OF AUTHORITY.

When you read a book two questions arise in your mind concerning the statements it contains: First, are they true? Second, who makes them?

If it is a book of science you are reading, and the statements concern the inquiry into natural phenomena, you may do wisely to look first to the author's name and reputation. If, for instance, you were reading a treatise on the higher mathematics, or perhaps one on the intricate mechanics of stair-building, you would do well to trouble yourself only with an author of the highest repute, because that would be your guarantee against deception or false information. To the student of the exact sciences the report of experts alone is valuable; and if I, who am not an astronomer, wish to know what is known in that science, I prefer to consult some acknowledged authority who will tell me what is certainly ascertained, so far as I can comprehend it, and who will not, at any rate, mix up his own or other people's opinions or speculations with the established facts of the science.

But, on the side of morals, it is very possible to overstate the importance of authority. In morals there are no laymen. Each one of us has a right to be an inquirer. You need not say, "Such is the truth," in a question of morals, "because so John Wesley, or Jonathan Edwards, or the Pope, or Brigham Young, or Confucius, or Mahomet proclaimed or affirmed it." In morals you are dealing with your own conduct, and your own soul or spiritual part; and you cannot take shelter behind some one else, because it is your own conduct, founded on your own convictions or faith, which alone can form your character—which is your soul.

In the teachings of Jesus you find instruction, and in His life the model for your own life; and these are all-sufficient. You may accept them as final, and upon them build your own faith and life. In the Gospels they are placed before us in a manner intelligible to the least educated, the most humble or savage, as the sufficient guide for our conduct here, and our training through that conduct, for the future life. Millions have, fortunately, taken these, without further inquiry, as the absolute and final truth in morals, the sufficient guide for their lives.

You may do the same. But, also, you may inquire, even in this case. If you have doubts, as so many have in these days, you are bound to inquire;

for you may confidently say, "If there is a God, and if He has given us the needed instructions for that course in this life which shall lead us safely to the higher life, He cannot be offended if I use the faculties He gave me to inquire into this truth."

You may go further, and say, "To insist upon mere authority in this case may weaken the weight of the truth itself; for if it is true, it is so not merely because it there stands written, but further, because it must stand in harmony with the works of God in the creation so far as I can comprehend these."

Thus, to assert that the Golden Rule is the true rule of living *because* Jesus delivered it may not be conclusive upon some minds. But if you show that, also, it *is* the true rule; that according to which men and society here can most beneficently act upon each other, and which, by its practice, will actually best fit a soul for life beyond the grave, then you produce conviction upon a reasoning but doubting being.

You may safely accept as final, then, and without further inquiry, if you like, the words and the life of Jesus; but also you may reason and inquire, as we have been doing in all that goes before in this book. Such inquiry will show you that the Golden Rule is the true rule of life and action, because it

applies perfectly to every phase and condition of life and society—a fact which is established by the general experience of mankind, the life of Jesus being itself the most conspicuous and instructive application and example we know of.

You will read, perhaps, in current literature about what are called "other Bibles"—the sacred books of other nations, as those of the Chinese, Hindoos, and Mohammedans. It is a fashion, just now, to magnify these writings; to place them on an equality with the Bible, and even to call some of them superior to it. You need not trouble your minds with these trivialities. Whatever is good, just, and wise must, in the nature of things, be so, without regard to authority. For us Jesus was the author of those final sayings which make plain to us the mystery and the purpose of our lives. He not only taught, but lived; and His life and His words make our complete and sufficient guide. If, anywhere else, good has been taught and lived—amen; let us be glad. It would be strange, indeed, if nowhere else except in Europe, and later in America, mankind had been able to get true views of life. You will notice that no one pretends to have discovered in those "other Bibles" any higher or more forcible teaching of these all-important truths than we possess. If we have the sum and substance of all,

that is enough for us. There can be no parties in morals.

If, indeed, anywhere, some one should discover a new law of life, higher and better than that left us by Jesus, that would be a matter of supreme interest and infinite importance to all of us. Thus, to a pious Chinese who had accepted, as final, the saying of Confucius: "Recompense evil with justice, and recompense kindness with kindness," the Golden Rule and the whole tenor of the life and teachings of Jesus might come with a quite startling effect, as a new revelation of a much higher life than that which, until then, he had accepted as the best truth. For there is a very wide difference between doing justice to your enemy and loving him as yourself.

A new code of morals, a new rule of life, leading us to higher things, both in this life and the next, than the Golden Rule—this would certainly demand all our attention. But this you see nowhere pretended to.

Jesus "brought life and immortality to light." His message connected this life with the other, and thus established for us the real proportions of this life, and gave us the true perspective. If this life is all we have to live, it becomes the most important phenomenon with which we have to deal; and each

of us has the right to use it as seems to him, on the whole, best for his personal gratification. In that case to talk to us about self-restraint for the benefit of others is rank folly, and very many, indeed, in our logical days so regard it. But if this life is but an insignificant fraction of the sum of our existence, that changes the whole problem. It was this which, as you will find in the Gospels, Jesus so constantly and strenuously insisted on. The more closely you study His life and His words, the more clearly you will see that both were based on the theory that our souls are immortal. "My kingdom is not of this world," He said. The future life is the foundation and justification of all He urged concerning our conduct of this life.

The burden of His message to mankind is, that wrong-doing injures the perpetrator infinitely more than the sufferer, because it debases his spiritual nature, though it may advance his merely worldly prosperity; that we are not to strive after the "things of this world," fame, honor, riches, or even comfort, because, as they are difficult of attainment, so they are apt to absorb our attention exclusively, and thus draw it away from the eternal things which, if they are real, as He taught, are of course of far greater moment; that self-sacrifice in the cause of duty, and for the welfare and benefit of others, is the true

service of God and the true life for ourselves, because in this way only can we build up our characters, and train and perfect our spiritual parts. He taught that we are watchfully to curb and keep under control the body, with its passions and desires which come to us with our merely animal parts; and to regard as the all-important element in ourselves that nobler and permanent part which is destined to a life beyond the grave, and which we call the soul. He was not an ascetic, and He nowhere advises or suggests that we shall make ourselves unhappy or uncomfortable for the mere sake of unhappiness or sterile self-denial. It is not hatred of the sunlight He teaches, but sharing it with our fellows. But He urges constantly, and reasonably if there is for us a future life, that the true life here consists, not in satisfaction, but in restraint; not in gratification, but in self-denial for the happiness of others; not in the selfish pursuit of our own objects, but in devotion to our neighbors—our fellow-men.

What I wish you clearly to apprehend is, that this is all utterly reasonable, practical, and clearly wise, supposing there is for us a future life. Moreover, it is all in strict harmony with whatever we know of the constitution of the universe, of human nature, and human society. If we are capable of continued existence outside of our bodies and beyond

the grave, then undoubtedly we cannot do better than to pursue such a course of conduct here as will maintain a spiritual life apart from or independent of the body which perishes; and to regard, as of minor consequence, those things which, clearly, we cannot take with us into another life. Hence Jesus reasonably insisted on subordination of the body to the spirit; on the sacrifice of ease, pleasure, bodily comfort, ambition, power, wealth, and of all merely bodily pleasures and gratifications, to the dictates of duty; and for this life so pursued He held out the reward of an immortal life beyond the grave, a life to be lived without the burdens and disabilities of the body, and therefore, of course, a broader, freer, less oppressed, and more enjoyable life, in every sense except the merely animal.

It is a great reward, as I hope you will see, and one eminently worth all the effort required to secure it.

The sailor labors patiently for months and years in the most toilsome, anxious, and hazardous of professions, looking cheerfully forward to the reward of a few days of leisure, freedom, and enjoyment on shore after the close of his voyage. But to us all is held out the prospect, after "life's fitful fever," not of a brief period, but of an eternity of liberty, in a boundless immensity of space filled with the

wonderful works of God, for us to view and investigate with faculties enlarged and freed from our present bonds.

As the theory of existence thus propounded by Jesus is everywhere absolutely reasonable, and not inconsistent with what we know here of life, so in the like spirit He everywhere insists that God is our Father. Not our king, our despot, our tyrant, our unreasonable commander, but "Our Father which is in Heaven."

Jesus does not present us God as a being who, having brought us into existence, thereupon turned his back upon us, and left us as foundlings on a strange door-step; but as a Father who cares for us, watches over us, to whom we may confidently appeal in our needs. He does not "coddle" us, or do for us that which we should do for ourselves; even a wise earthly father knows that his children need to be strengthened and developed by hardships and sufferings, and will be the better and stronger men and women if, in their youth, they have been forced, even at the cost of many disagreeables, to be self-dependent.

God is our Father—so Jesus taught; and as in your childhood your parents, if they were wise, valued the right direction of your efforts more than mere success in achievement, so, doubtless, our Fa-

ther in Heaven regards us poor children of a larger growth with a judgment different from that of men. We are to do what is right and leave the result to God.

You will see, I hope, that the social theory of Jesus is thus perfect at all points. It fits every phase of life. Its general observance would form, without further effort or regulations, a true and perfect society or nation. But it has reference mainly and primarily, as I have also tried to show you, to the individual. It is the individual spirit that is to be formed and trained for the future life; and there are no circumstances, no social surroundings so untoward that this preparation of the individual may not go on. It is the individual soul, living solitary in its strange bodily casement, which appeals to its Father in Heaven for help, for strength, for consolation.

Hence, in this life which He prescribed, and there only, men find serenity of soul, fortitude to meet the mishaps and failures of life: because they leave the end to God, in the belief that, while it is theirs to do their duty, the result lies with Him.

That is what Jesus meant by faith. He nowhere pretends that the future life is susceptible of demonstration. Everywhere he insists on faith, and repeats again and again, with unceasing iteration, that

without faith there is no possibility of a true life. There may be those, fortunate, prosperous, powerful, whose efforts seem sufficient to themselves, and who do not need this dependence on God as a Father. But ask the poor, the wretched, the neglected or suffering, the unfortunate, the disappointed, the weary.

And who is not, at some time, among these?

XIII.

MIRACLES.

That Jesus was a very extraordinary character is admitted even by intelligent men who choose to reject the authority of His teaching and His theory of life. That the Gospel narratives, which preserve for us the only account we have of His life, character, and ministrations are very remarkable literary productions, is freely granted by the ablest critics who examine them from the merely literary and historical stand-point.

Independently, therefore, of their supreme importance and authority as the guide to correct living, these Gospels deserve your attention, your careful and intelligent study, as the biographical records of the most extraordinary personage of whom history makes mention. If it is a necessary part of intellectual training to familiarize ourselves with the lives of those who have greatly affected the course of events or the development of mankind, you certainly cannot afford, as an intelligent being, to give an inattentive or perfunctory study to the biography

of one who, born among a rude, bigoted, and subject people, of the humblest parentage, associating all his life with the illiterate and poor—the common people; taking not the least part in the government, either sacerdotal or political, of His nation; having no party in the state or in the church; neither seeking nor making friends or supporters among the powerful or wealthy; and put to death on a criminal charge long before He had reached middle life, yet by His life, His doctrines, and His death more profoundly and permanently affected human thought and human society than all the conquerors and philosophers who ever lived.

You will find the Gospel records remarkable for a moderation, decorum, and simplicity of style which have justly won the admiration of the most eminent critics. The Gospel narrative, regarded as mere "literature," is, by the consent of the ablest students of many centuries, a very notable and extraordinary production. The writers record the wisest and deepest sayings of Jesus without comment; they tell of surprising miracles without boasting or pretence; they relate for us what Jesus said and did, in the simplest language, without art or apparent skill, oftenest as men who did not themselves comprehend the full meaning and significance of their report.

What they omit to tell us adds much to the lit-

erary merit, and very greatly to the character and credibility, of their report.

Of the early life of Jesus, for instance, they have very little to say. Minute details of His life as a child and as a youth would be of the deepest interest to us; they would gratify a curiosity which all feel who have considered His life at all. But they would be of no real value to us; they could not help to impress upon our minds the supreme importance of His message, or of His theory of life and society. The Gospel writers tell us therefore only that He was born in obscure and humble life, that He was in childhood taken into Egypt for safety; that in early youth He sat in the Temple and, listening to the disputes of the learned doctors, puzzled them by His uncommon intelligence and clearness of spiritual insight; that He was subject to His parents; that the incidents of His early life were treasured in His poor mother's heart—and that is all, until He went to be baptized by John, was later alone in the wilderness, and thereafter, a man grown and, as it is supposed, thirty years of age, began at once His brief period of public ministration.

It is impossible to doubt that the Gospel writers thought Jesus a very extraordinary personage. Surely it is the more remarkable that they are so reticent concerning the details of His early life. They had

not known Jesus in His childhood, and their plan and aim appear to have been to relate in detail only or mainly that of which they were eye-witnesses. To the critical reader this self-restraint marks their narrative as accurate and credible; to all it makes the more impressive the story of His public life.

It is the most deeply touching story in all history. But it is nowhere overwrought; the reporters never transcend the bounds of the most rigid decorum; they make no attempt to impress themselves upon us. Everywhere, too, the life and the doctrine are harmonious—even where we see plainly that the life was a stumbling-block, and the message a mystery to those who followed Him with wondering eyes and differing hopes and expectations. For you cannot read attentively the Gospel narrative without seeing that the disciples and followers of Jesus were oftenest blind to His real aims and purposes, and incapable, at the time, of taking in the spirit of the message they heard. How wonderful, therefore, that, failing to comprehend Him, as they did, they should yet have left us so clear a report of Him!

There were not wanting, somewhat later, writers ready enough to gratify the pious curiosity and the love of the marvellous of people who, hearing of Jesus through the Gospels, and ignorantly fascinated not by the spirit of His message, which they

but dimly apprehended, but by the wonder of His miraculous works, burned to hear more. There is a curious body of literature, known as the Apocryphal Gospels, in which you may read minute details of the childhood and youth of Jesus; and nothing, perhaps, more strikingly sets out the marvellous restraint, or makes clearer the simple and wonderful truthfulness of the Gospel narratives, than the reading of these apocryphal and invented tales. There Jesus figures as a mere wonder-worker from His earliest childhood. Miracles crowd in, to the shutting out completely of the real meaning and purpose of His life.

It is instructive to compare these miracles with those recorded in the Gospels. You will see that in these apocryphal narratives they are mere foolish magic, where they are not contrary to the whole character of Jesus. A leprous girl is cured by drinking the water in which the infant Jesus had been washed. A young man whom sorcerers had turned into a mule is restored by placing the infant Jesus on his back. Mary needing to wash the child's coat, He causes a well of water to spring out of the ground near a sycamore-tree. The boy Jesus plays with other boys; they make clay figures of animals, and Jesus causes these figures to walk, fly, eat, and drink. Joseph being an unskilful carpenter, Jesus helps him out by

miraculously widening the gates and giving proper shape to the buckets, sieves, and boxes Joseph makes. The boy Jesus amuses himself by making fish-pools, and strikes dead, by His will, another boy who had broken the pools and let the water run out. He disobeys His school-master, and when the master is about to whip Him Jesus causes his hand to wither. He causes a boy to die who carelessly runs against Him in the street, and curses with blindness those who complain of Him.

You see how trivial are these mere "wonders," and, above all, how false and repugnant to the character of Jesus, as it is developed in the Gospels. You notice, also, the contrast between these stories of magic and the miracles related by the Evangelists.

Still, there are miracles recorded in the Gospels, you say.

So there are. Let us consider them:

In the first place, you will notice that these miracles had never for their object the mere exhibition of remarkable or supernatural powers to astonish or terrify the beholders. They had not for their object either the gratification of any passion, in Jesus, of anger, or revenge, or ambition.

Further, no one thought so little of these miracles as Jesus himself. He did them as one to whom the power was natural, and no more surprising than the

capability of a Frenchman to speak French. Oftenest He commanded the subject of a miraculous cure to "tell no man," but go to the Temple, give thanks for relief, and make the prescribed offerings. When the Pharisees asked him to perform some wonder he refused, saying, "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign." When the nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum came and besought Him to come down and heal the lad who lay at the point of death, Jesus at first refused, saying, "Except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe;" but when further entreated, and seeing that here was no vulgar wonder-seeker, he dismissed the man, saying, "Go thy way, thy son liveth;" "and the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken to him, and went his way," because he was not as the Pharisees, a mere seeker after signs and wonders.

Of miracles done for the mere sake of exciting surprise or striking terror into beholders there is not a trace in the Gospels. He "went about doing good," as one to whom the desire and the power were equally natural and proper. But it is remarkable, and singularly in harmony with His teachings of the subordination of this life to the next, that He made so extremely moderate a use of this power. Were there no future life, but were this life all we have to live, and therefore its comforts and satis-

factions of the extremest and final importance to us, in that case Jesus, possessed of such powers, and of so merciful and pitying a spirit, should have relieved not one, but all the lame, blind, and suffering.

Still, you repeat, it is reported that He did miracles. How can we, trained in scientific methods, believe in a miracle?

Well, then, what is a miracle? It is an occurrence out of the ordinary course of nature, so far as we have ascertained this ordinary course. It is contrary to what we call natural laws. Now, before we declare a phenomenon absolutely contrary to natural laws we ought to be sure that we know all the laws of nature. How can we say this—we who have, with all our science, made but the faintest impression upon the sum of knowledge; and who see at every advance which science makes, not less, but more remaining unknown to us? Many things which are now common facts of our daily lives would have seemed "miraculous" a few centuries ago. The poor Marquis of Worcester, it is said, was put into a mad-house because he foretold, even dimly, the possibility of railroads and steamships.

And do not forget that we have explained nothing when we speak of "natural laws." We have only classified a phenomenon when we have referred it to its "natural laws." We call it a natural law

that water seeks its level; that the magnet attracts iron and steel. We define electricity to be a "subtile fluid," and have gone some way in discovering its methods of action, which we call its laws. But we really know nothing of these and other mysteries, except the mere mechanics of their appearance. We know not how or why the magnet attracts iron, or why the needle points toward the north. Rightly, and not superficially regarded, the mystery of nature is not less but only much more a mystery, the more closely we observe and the more deeply we penetrate what we call the laws according to which physical phenomena occur.

"Thou wilt have no mystery or mysticism," says Carlyle, "wilt walk through thy world by the rush-light of what thou callest truth, and even by the hand-lamp of what I call Attorney logic, and 'explain' all and 'account for' all, or believe nothing of it. Doth not thy cow calve? Doth not thy bull gender? Thou thyself, wert not thou born? wilt thou not die? Explain me all this."

Jesus "did many wonders and miracles," and He made as little of them as God does of the daily miracle of a man's life, or of the constantly recurring miracle of the sun's rising. And He nowhere required or suggested that we should think more of them.

For what were all his miracles, or all other wonders, compared with the miracle of His own life and teachings? Surely this is the real miracle, the event most wonderful, and least to be accounted for —that He, so born, into such a society, at that age of the world, should have taught and lived as He did. To take that for granted as in the natural course, and to wonder at, or object to, or attend to only those acts of His life which we call miracles, and which He clearly regarded as trivial: surely this is only to fling away the greater in order to stumble over the less. It is to seize the shell and throw away the kernel of the nut.

What you have to do is not to trouble yourself about the possibility of miracles—for who can assure you that, some day, what we call miraculous deeds may not be as common as blackberries? You have to ascertain what bearing, if any, they have upon the question of your conduct of life, or upon the question of the value of the theory of life propounded by Jesus. You are here, according to that theory, to prepare and train your spiritual part for a future existence beyond the grave, and without the body. Now, what has a miracle in it that it can help you toward this supremely important end? If anything, then it is important that you should ascertain all about it. If not, then it is at least immaterial. If

that which Jesus taught, and which He exemplified in His life, is evidently untrue, or if it is improbable as being out of harmony with the general creation or plainly unsuited to life — then undoubtedly His miracles do not justify or lend force to His doctrines. If His teaching is true, then the miracles add nothing to it for us; though undoubtedly they attracted attention to His doctrine from the beholders.

Jesus restored a blind man to sight, and we call that a miracle, and wonder at it. But look about you and see if all our lives are not surrounded by even greater wonders. You bury a seed—a cherry-stone; if it grows at all, surely that is a miracle, for you cannot in any way explain it or account for it. If it grows into a cherry-tree, is not that still more a miracle? Certainly you do not account for it, in any real sense of explaining a phenomenon, by saying that it is the result of a natural law. That is only a subterfuge. You would call it a miracle, perhaps, if the cherry-stone produced an oak-tree; but is it not more wonderful, stranger, less easily to be explained, less credible *a priori*, that a cherry-stone should, with absolute certainty, produce a cherry-tree, and never by chance an oak or an elm?

The words and the life of Jesus are, so far as we

can see, final. His theory of human life, of the career, so to speak, open to the human soul, is at one with all we know of natural laws, of the phenomena of the universe, and of society. None of us can imagine a higher or further reaching rule of conduct than the command to "love your neighbor as yourself," or a clearer and nobler commentary on this rule than the Sermon on the Mount. The old laws of the Jews and of the heathen were such that, as has often been remarked, really good men and women lived above them. They were better than their laws. But who of us lives above or beyond this newer law of Jesus? The so-called Christian world would be changed as by magic to-day if the greater part of it even strove to live according to this last "new commandment."

Under the old law men were better than the law. Under the new dispensation men are not so good as this "new commandment," yet they are far better than men ever were before. It is, perhaps, strange to you, as you survey the Christian world, that it is not better; that selfishness is so greatly the rule; that men strive and scramble for wealth and honors and predominance as they do; that the Fifth Avenue and the Five Points lie so near together, and that the earnings of the poor are so small, while the superfluities of the rich are so boundless.

Well, the Christian world is not better, because it is not Christian. But all history shows that it easily might be very much worse; and it is not worse, only because it has so large a leaven of Christianity.

XIV.

NATURE OF THE FUTURE LIFE.

Reading the Gospel story of Jesus you find that while He insisted constantly on the fact of a future life beyond the grave, on its intimate connection with this life, and on the supreme importance of that relation, and made this the great and overshadowing element of His teaching, the basis of His theory of the present life, yet he nowhere revealed to us in detail the features of that future state of existence. He said very little about them, and that only incidentally. To a sophistical query put to Him by certain Sadducees He replied that "In Heaven there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage." To the penitent thief on the cross He promised, "This night shalt thou be with me in Paradise!" Only everywhere He insists on the fatherly superintendence of God over our lives, if we are willing to submit to such care.

From His oft-repeated instructions and admonitions concerning the conduct of the present life, however, we may by inference gather at least some

leading traits of the other; just as, if an experienced traveller should advise you as to your necessary and judicious preparations for a journey in a distant, and to you unknown country, you would be able, from his counsel, to arrive at some general conclusions as to the characteristics of the country you proposed to visit.

Thus, when we find Jesus on all occasions making light of bodily gratifications and pleasures, and regarding as of no real value, but rather as serious hinderances, the possession of wealth, honor, personal predominance, luxury, bodily ease, and the desire or ambition for these, we may reasonably conclude that such things have no place in the future life.

Beyond this, it seems probable that the conditions of that life are inconceivable by us in our present state, because, with our limited bodily senses, it is impossible for us to imagine anything fundamentally different from those objects or outside of those laws which surround us on this planet, and for the apprehension of which our physical senses are fitted. We cannot conceive of a new color not contained in the spectrum of our sun; though it would be very rash in us to assert that some other of the myriads of suns in the infinite universe does not give out to its planets a color unknown to us, or that the organs of vision of some animals do not

reveal to them colors which the human eye and brain cannot discern. Our minds cannot conceive of an animal constructed on a plan essentially different from that used by the Creator on our earth; and this plan is now known to students to be simple, and resting on one or a very few general ideas. We know there are sounds inaudible to our ears. It is believed by some physicists to be demonstrable that our planetary system did not arrange itself by virtue solely of laws now in action, but that if we could trace back its history to an early period we should come to a time when some other and different laws were in action. But our reason cannot grasp the nature of such laws. We are unable to conceive, for instance, of a law which could have occupied the place of the law of gravitation, but should have acted in a different way.

We may, however, take hold of the problem from another side. Let us suppose that we are to find prevailing in the future life the same general laws which obtain here around us. Though not certain, this is at least supposable—and we know of none other. Consider, then, that all our necessities and sufferings, as well as our blessings and joys in this present life, are of two kinds. They are physical, and moral or spiritual.

The first come from, and relate to, the body.

They form a very large and important class; and of these, you will observe, we must be entirely rid whenever we lay down our bodies. Hunger, thirst, disease, pain, and all the wants, natural and artificial, which are bred of a desire to gratify the body and the passions which pertain to the body—all these can have, we must believe, no place in a region where the spirit or soûl is divested of the encumbrance of this body.

It is useful for you to consider for a little how wide is the area of those wants which pertain to, or arise from, the body; and what, and how much, therefore, must disappear of that which concerns and engrosses our present lives, if we are to live hereafter divested of mere bodily necessities and desires. It is sometimes objected to the Christian idea of Heaven, as a place of universal enjoyment, and of security from ills and accidents, that it is impracticable, and a mere dream. "The fundamental condition of happiness is inequality of condition," said an eminent statesman to me; "we cannot all be equally happy, because happiness consists in superiority over others. If I am to dine I must have a cook and other servants. I am happy because my wants are supplied; but every want of mine requires, for its gratification, the labor of some subsidiary person, some one less happily placed than I. It is the ful-

filling of our wants which makes us happy. If we have no desires to be gratified we are simple savages. To real happiness, in any condition, therefore, there must be ruler and ruled; there must be greater and less; there must be service, and the servant cannot be equally happy with him he serves. Happiness and enjoyment arise entirely out of difference of condition; a man is happy or fortunate because others are less happy or fortunate. Equality of conditions would banish enjoyment. If all are equally good, or comfortable, or at ease, or powerful alike, then the essential element of happiness and enjoyment is lacking. Hence," concluded he, "I do not make much account of what the clergy tell us of Heaven. None of them have been there; it is all a muddle, and a sensible man had better think little of it, and attend to his affairs."

I hope you will see that this is a merely selfish and even brutal view. For what is it, in this argument, that is spoken of as "happiness?" Rank, wealth, predominance, are things undoubtedly helpful to a certain measure and kind of enjoyment here; they are important, but on animal grounds solely. They are desired, and greedily sought, because their possession flatters our ignoble vanity; or because they are expected to insure bodily comfort and freedom from care and from the meaner

anxieties, most of which we bring on ourselves by pampering our bodies; or because by their help men hope to advance their families, or because they are thought to give access to pleasanter society; or because they enable their possessor to exercise power over others, which, after all, he has not the wisdom to use rightly.

Now, observe that all these things, important as they may seem, have relation solely to our present condition, in which the body, with its constant calls, plays so great a part, and in which we have evil wills and passions to gratify. Leave off the body, with all it implies of food, sleep, shelter, rest, amusement, luxury, power, and turn the intelligence or spiritual part away from transitory and vain or mean ambitions to true, because lasting—*everlasting* objects; and all these coveted and engrossing matters, the possession of which, after all, is sure to embarrass and mar even our present lives, but which produce and necessitate inequality of conditions and of enjoyment, not merely cease to be important; they cease to be considered at all. They drop out.

Why, for instance, should I desire wealth, if I have no bodily necessities and animal passions to gratify; if I no longer feel the need of houses, lands, carriages, servants, society with its cumbrous and costly arrangements? Or why, to go a long

step higher, should I covet power or predominance, if I see, face to face, the eternal fitness and harmony, and am patient, as God is patient, because I know that eternity gives time to solve all problems?

But, you may say, there are joys and sorrows which pertain not to the body; or, at least, not to that alone. There are passions, as that of ambition, which trouble the mind or spirit, and move the body only through that.

Let us consider this for a moment. You will find that all the evil passions require for their gratification the use of the body. Granted, now, what you have argued: that the intelligence or soul is wedded to such passions; suppose it, then, divested of the body on which it depends for ability to gratify these desires or propensities, but still filled with them; still longing for their gratification. Take the case of a man absorbed, as the first Napoleon was, by an intense passion to rule and control, but left, in the other life, with absolutely no means of acquiring power over the least of his fellows; able to appeal neither to their fears nor to their necessities nor to their passions; powerless, therefore, and the prey of the bitterest pangs. Or take the case of any other selfish and evil passion which has become fastened on the intelligence or soul, and rules and engrosses it,

gnawing for satisfaction, but totally unable, for lack of the body, to obtain this satisfaction.

It is not only easily conceivable, it is a reasonable and necessary supposition, that the passions and desires to which we here give ourselves over we shall carry with us into the future life. It would be contrary to reason to suppose that the character, the complexion of the vital part of man, is greatly or at all changed by passing out of the body. It has changed its condition, its locality; it no longer lives in the body which it has inhabited and nourished, and used as a means, and which, on its departure, rots and goes to enrich the soil. But it is no more supposable that this change of condition and habitation alters the character, or eliminates the desires, aspirations, or passions of the man, to which he has made himself subject here, than you would argue that one would change his nature by removing from Europe to America, or from one street to another.

Now, there is no deeper or keener form of suffering, even in this life, than that which comes from the consciousness of error, and of opportunity sacrificed by folly. Yet here we see but dimly. What may, and, indeed, what must not such misery be in the great light of the future life, if a soul, cumbered by and subject to mere earthly and bodily passions, is forced to see that, by comparison with the

higher good, and in the light of the greater intelligence, it had given itself to the merest trivialities; had devoted its powers to objects of no real value and to others repugnant to those higher things which, over there, must be seen of all—the bad as well as the good—to be the only real sources of enduring joy and life.

We may thus reasonably conceive for the wilful wrong-doer, by the operation of what may be called a natural law of the spiritual world, a far keener punishment than is thought of in the common notion of a physical Hell. As the man who violates physical laws in this life must suffer for that in his body, so he who has violated moral or spiritual laws, though he may by great care seem to evade punishment—the result of his violation of laws—in this world must, we may reasonably believe, suffer hereafter; because, as we know, spiritual pains are keener than physical.

On the other hand, spiritual joys and satisfactions are far greater, even in this life, than those which arise from or pertain to the body. Love, friendship, the fulfilment of duty, the sacrifice of self for others, the love of knowledge, the sense of admiration for the wonders of creation, and the appreciation of harmony in the works and designs of God—all these are independent of the body; they may be

experienced by and become the most potent and enduring causes of happiness in this life to even those who have the feeblest bodies, or are cast in the least fortunate situations. Transferred to a broader life, with greatly enlarged powers, and relieved of the bonds and slavery in which we here live to our physical part, we can conceive of these sensations and experiences as yielding an infinitely larger measure of happiness and content than we are even capable of imagining here.

This conception of the future state has nothing repugnant to any laws we know of. It is in strict harmony with all we know. It satisfies the sentiment of justice which is implanted in all our souls. That requires a theory of life which shall, in some way, equalize all the varied conditions of life. A religion which should teach that only the intelligent, or only the wealthy, or only the healthful, or only certain families or combinations of men should enjoy happiness at any time, would be manifestly demoralizing, not only to those excluded, but even more so to those included in the terms. To deny the possibility of existence after this life is to assert just this monstrous injustice. It is to declare that, as all the happiness we can attain, on this supposition, is in the present life, only the shrewdest, the most selfish, the luckiest, the strongest, the most cunning, and

least scrupulous shall enjoy even the very moderate and variable degree of happiness attainable by our race here. Such a thought is depraving and ruinous.

Taken by itself the present life is a failure. To complete it and justify it, the life beyond the grave needs to be superadded to it.

But, granted a future life, then, plainly, that must be absolutely Democratic. All men must be equally capable, regardless of circumstances, even here, to prepare themselves for it. The theory of Jesus answers this reasonable demand. It requires neither learning, nor wealth, nor great station, nor peculiar opportunity to enable a man to comprehend the conditions, and, with God's help, reasonably to fulfil them. The golden rule, the Sermon on the Mount, are intelligible to all conditions of men. Hence, Jesus presents God to us as a just God; as one who is no respecter of persons; as the loving Father of all our race. On this theory it matters not where we live, or in what circumstances, whether we are fortunate or wretched, raised up or depressed—to every human soul the door of Heaven stands equally open. He shall only conform himself to a law so simple that the smallest child can, with patience, be made to comprehend it, and which appeals at once to the heart even of a savage—the law of returning good for evil, and loving your neighbor as yourself.

We cannot prove scientifically that our life is to be continued beyond the brief term in which we inhabit our bodies. But neither can any man prove the contrary. Of the two, far the most possible, the most probable, and the most credible is the assertion of Jesus, that we are undoubtedly to live beyond the grave.

We cannot *know* whether there is a future life; hence Jesus, who so positively and constantly declared it, still insisted on Faith as the great element needed to enable us to control and properly shape our lives here.

Nor is it necessary for our welfare here or beyond that we should have this certainty of knowledge. We can do our duties without knowing. Hence, when one of the Apostles sought to pry into the hidden future, Jesus answered him, "What is that to thee? Follow thou me!"

It certainly is not stranger or less credible that you should continue to exist hereafter than that you now exist. On the contrary, given my mind, judgment, hopes, desires, extending far outside of and beyond the present brief life, and given at the same time the boundless space and possibilities which I see, for the exercise of all my higher powers in a life outside of the body, and as a reasoning being, going entirely on probabilities, the extinction of my

spirit with the body would seem far more wonderful, less to be expected, than the continuance of my soul beyond the present life.

Death—physical death merely—is, to those who first see it, a far more amazing and incredible phenomenon than life. Death, in the sense of extinction, is, in fact, incredible to mankind. It is repugnant to our thoughts. We do not really believe it. No one who has lost a dear friend but finds it, in his inner soul and hidden thoughts, far easier to expect that the lost shall return to his sight and company at any moment, even in this life, than that he or she is absolutely and eternally extinct.

Yet physical death is as common a fact as life itself.

The death of our bodies is a change, and we are so constituted that all change is annoying to us. Men and women are creatures of habit, and we very early contract a habit of living in our bodies, which becomes more fixed as we pass middle life: so that it is, for the most part, youth only which rashly risks the loss of life. Yet the decay and final loss of the body we inhabit is only like a compulsory removal from an old and rickety to a new and more convenient house; and it is, on the whole, the most interesting experience open to man, so far as we know. None other compares with it; and, barring the phys-

ical repugnance to it which the Creator has, for obvious reasons, implanted in all living creatures, and not in man alone, there is no reason why we should not look forward to this inevitable change with the same intelligent curiosity with which we should anticipate the exploration of an unknown but probably intensely interesting country in this life.

Continued conscious life in another place after the death of our bodies is not an improbable supposition, but clearly the contrary. We have the necessary outfit for it. We are capable of it. There is boundless space for us. The further we penetrate here into the mysteries and secrets of nature, the more reason we have to believe that of both time and space there is infinite quantity; and that beyond the grave there is room for all.

Is it not an incredible supposition that this earth of ours—one of the smallest planets of what astronomers know to be one of the smaller solar systems whose number itself is infinite—is the only spot in the universe inhabited by conscious beings?

Our lives are, in any case, a mystery. "Whence, and whither?" are the two questions against which philosophers in all ages have broken their heads, ever since men began to do more than eat, drink, and multiply like the beasts. We cannot solve these

mysteries here. We can but dimly account for or explain even a few of the commonest phenomena of our present lives. But the more carefully we compare our own lives, motives, acts, habits, and tendencies with our surroundings and our boundaries, the more forcibly we are drawn by reason to the conclusion that there is a method and design in all, looking far beyond our present life.

We see, for instance, in many aspects of human society a singular care exercised for the preservation of the individual's liberty of action. Consider for a moment what would be the effect on human society, and on the possibility of individual development of character, if the span of life were considerably prolonged! What would be the effect on a large section of our race if men of great and peculiar genius, like Cæsar, Bonaparte, or the first Vanderbilt, could live even two hundred and fifty years? In that time the first Vanderbilt, with his faculties unimpaired, would have mastered all the railroads and other means of intercommunication in America. Bonaparte would have subjugated the greater part of the inhabited world, and have stretched his iron and stupid despotism over all Europe. A few such men, with only so much time to work in, would impose their fetters on the will of the human race, and wrench men's lives

and minds out of their normal relations to God and to Nature.

Thought, experience, will, life, remain free in the mass of individuals, largely because in the mysterious plan of the Creator seventy years complete the natural life of man, and soon after fifty his faculties and energies grow dull, even though too often his greed, ambition, and other evil passions increase immoderately.

Again, we give our lives here to the pursuit of happiness, and yet know, or may know out of all human experience, that it is impossible for man to realize even the lowest ideal. We are defeated at every turn. A glutton, whose notion of bliss is abundance of pleasing food, may, with labor and good-luck, attain that; but indigestion, gout, or lack of appetite presently spoils his enjoyment. "It is a world of disappointment," complained an old sailor; "you can't be drunk all the time, and when you get sober you have a headache!" This forecastle philosopher rudely epitomized the experience of mankind. It is only the joys of the higher, the spiritual, life which bring no reaction and breed no disappointed hopes.

Our present life is filled with pains, anxieties, and sorrows, with, on the whole, but a moderate admixture of futile delights in the most fortunate. All

that we see, feel, and know of it, all our capacity for suffering, and for happiness alike—all has sense, coherence, and ceases to be repugnant to our ideal of justice, if we suppose that we are but temporary sojourners here, and that the main object of our brief lives in the body is that we may train, develop, and educate our nobler faculties for another sphere of existence and of activity.

Consider, again, how vile is the merely animal part of man when it shows itself through the removal of moral or social restraints; how absolutely and greatly different from and worse than that of the beasts.

Consider how mysterious and dangerous is the influence of the body on the spirit; how physical habits creep on our nobler part, and subjugate and take possession of it, until we seem to see, in the last degradation of even powerful intellects, the body swallowing up, incorporating the spirit, and leaving the vicious and selfish animal propensities supreme. A miser is blindly covetous, not only beyond his needs, but beyond the time when he can use his hoard. A lewd person becomes the victim of depraved thoughts which remain to torture him long after his body has ceased to urge him, and when it refuses to respond to his desires. By many instances we see that the spirit may become depraved and remain so independently of the body, even here. How

reasonable, then, is the thought that, granted a future life, the depraved spirit must carry its vile desires and passions into that state, to torture it by the double suffering of a slavery to evil in a condition where the bad impulse can receive no satisfaction, and where its viciousness and its error are clearly seen "face to face."

We remember—is not that a mystery of mysteries? Why should we not rather forget? Our bodies decay, yet our memories remain; torpid, but easily revived. We forget nothing—alas! not even the trivial or the base, which we would gladly forget.

Nature is hard and cruel. Man's whole life is spent in a contest with her. God might, doubtless, have made this warfare easier to us; He would, perhaps, have done so had He not seen that the contest is needed to develop our higher and nobler faculties; to make us fit, perhaps even to make us capable, of immortality.

Consider how strange a mystery is time! We measure it with the greatest accuracy, and yet, so far as our sensations go, an hour is a curiously unfixed quantity. In suffering, hours are as days; in joy, they are as minutes. We speak of millions of years, of millions of miles. Try to compare in your minds these vast terms with the words eternity, infinity, and how pregnant is the Psalmist's saying, that to

God who dwells in eternity "a thousand years are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night;" and Peter's, "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing [as a first principle in considering God's dealings with mankind], that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

Is it not an important thought that all the researches and discoveries of modern science serve only to make what we call time more trifling, eternity more real, and space less bounded?

Do you complain that God has left us in such absolute intellectual ignorance of the hereafter? Does it appear to you in itself unreasonable? If God intended us to be free agents, we could be so only on the condition that we should *know* nothing of the future even in this life. Let us have any, even the least, certainty and positive knowledge that there is a future life, aside from revelation, or even of the future in this life, and some of the essential conditions of our existence, as free agents, at once disappear. In the light of such knowledge we should be free no longer, but coerced. The scheme of what we call Nature has clearly not our physical comfort for its end, but, through the struggle forced upon us, our moral and intellectual elevation, and preparation for another and higher stage of exist-

ence. Hence, as Paul picturesquely says, "We are as those who seek a country."

Let us, therefore, being forced to choose, and having intellectually the power of choice—let us elect the most probable, and act on the theory, the FAITH, that conscious life is for us eternal. That if it has begun here it is to end never. On that theory alone we can sensibly conduct our lives here, and make the most of them.

And you may safely admit that, revelation aside, it is only a theory; for the other is no more, and is, on the whole, as all reasoning shows, far less probable.

XV.

PRAYER.

PRAYER is when you speak with God.

Naturally this is, or should be, mainly, a private conversation. Hence, Jesus insisted, "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet."

He to whom we speak when we pray is "Our Father in Heaven," and Jesus impressed upon his hearers, continually, this relation of children to a father. As all His instruction was reasonable, so also this; for if there is a future life this describes the obvious and natural relation between men and Him who created men.

We are weak, He is strong; we are ignorant, He is wise; we are short-sighted, He sees the end from the beginning.

Similar in a degree are the differences between little children here and their earthly father. They cannot comprehend his purposes, much less his laws, which, though made for their good, seem in their eye harsh and often tyrannical. They ask, and he denies; they prefer their own wisdom, but he com-

pels them to his; they plan, and he interrupts their plans. Only as they come to years of discretion do the children of wise and thoughtful parents even begin to comprehend the care which has, oftenest unknown to them, guided their early years; the loving kindness which denied, and disappointed, and compelled, and, with endless efforts, led the young body and mind to good habits and good principles, and which, meantime, had often to bear with disobedience, misconduct, inattention, and misapprehension.

In this relation, as Jesus taught, men and women stand towards God, "Our Father in Heaven." "Except ye become as little children," He said, "ye cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

Now, what a loving father expects of his children is, not that they shall, at once, be unfailingly perfect. He knows that to the building up of the character of his children go years of patient training and personal experience; that this work is not completed even when they are young men and women. His first desire is that they shall love him; for it is only when he has secured their love and confidence that they will be inclined patiently and confidingly, or faithfully, to follow his instructions. Through their love he looks to see the growth of faith in his superior wisdom; that faith which,

while it will not, as he knows, shield them against disappointments, or absolve them from obedience to his will, yet tempers their sorrows, and makes submission reasonable, and hence easier.

A child asks many things of its parents, and is often refused. It asks many things which seem to it reasonable, but which the greater wisdom of the parent denies, because they are hurtful or unreasonable—not because he takes pleasure in denying the wishes of his children.

What, then, shall we, grown men and women—but still children in all wisdom compared with our Father in Heaven—what shall we ask Him for when we pray?

If He is really our Father, I think we may undoubtedly so speak to Him as a child here speaks to the father of whose love it feels assured. We may tell Him all that is in our hearts. We may ask Him for everything which seems to us desirable. We may come to Him with all our cares, burdens, anxieties, sorrows, wishes. "Cast your care (or anxiety) upon the Lord, for He careth for you," says the Scripture.

But we are to ask not as petulant, or greedy, or unreasonable beings; we are to pray, knowing that He to whom our prayer is addressed is infinitely wiser than we who ask, and knows what we cannot

know—what is for our best good. He would not be our Father if we could not go to Him with all our fears and hopes, our sorrows and joys—if we could not open to Him our hearts and our thoughts. But neither would He be our Father if He should use no wisdom in the answers to our prayers; nor should we be dutiful or loving children if we asked without confidence in His love and wisdom.

The sum of all prayer to God is in these words: "Thy will be done." But is it not the same with every request which a thoughtful child makes of its parents? Is it not the same with every prayer which a good soldier addresses to his general? Is it not the natural, the proper and necessary sum of every prayer made by an ignorant person to one of greater intelligence or wisdom? We wish ardently for many things in this life: how often and often we see, later, that had our desires of the time been granted, they would have been for us the greatest misfortunes!

"I thank God oftener for those wishes which have been ungratified than those which were fulfilled," said a middle-aged man—and only spoke the common experience of most men and women who have lived considerate and intelligent lives.

What we call "natural laws" are the common rules of that household in which God is "our Fa-

ther." We may violate those laws, but this violation brings its own punishment. Does that seem hard? Or unreasonable? Would it not be really unreasonable if God had provided either that it should be impossible for us to break these laws, or that we should not suffer from doing so? If God is our Father, we may reasonably regard it as an evidence of His interest in us that he leaves us at liberty to break His laws, and to bring upon ourselves the punishments which follow; because this experience, often sorrowful enough, this suffering from which we shrink, secures what, in view of the future and real life, is the needed development of our faculties and powers. A wise father knows that it is the child which has burned its fingers, and not that which has been persistently guarded by nurses from doing so, which is most certain not to play with fire.

The prayer of faith is necessarily the prayer of him who believes that God will do that which is for the best; of him who does his duty, and willingly leaves the result to God. On any other consideration prayer would be the unreasonable appeal of a creature of finite and very limited intelligence to a servant of absolute power without intelligence—that is to say, it would be an absurdity. You have probably read of what were foolishly called "prayer tests," which disclosed this singular notion, that God is to

be regarded not as a guide and helper for us in spiritual things, but rather as a powerful but subordinate being forced to do *our* will, if only we scream loud enough and unanimously enough to attract His attention. It was to such appeals as this that Jesus made answer, "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh a sign."

When we speak with God, when we ask somewhat of Him, it should surely be with a right view of the relations of the things we desire. We have a right to ask Him for those things which are necessary to us: these are help and strength in the effort to do our duties, and to avoid wrong-doing; for guidance in our lives; for His blessing on our plans and efforts, that we may have wisdom to direct them rightly; for courage and serenity of soul under difficulties, disappointments, and sorrows; for wisdom to conduct our lives aright, and in such manner that their general tendency shall be to prepare and train our spirits for the future life.

Shall we, then, not bring to Him, also, our distresses here, nor ask for safety out of peril, for security in life and health, for prosperity, for recovery from illness?

If God is our Father we cannot help, as children, but bring all these matters before Him. But the "prayer of Faith" which we read of must surely be

the prayer of him who appreciably remembers the true relations of things. In the eyes of God the All-seeing, death — physical death — must appear but a minor, perhaps even a trivial incident in the life of the individual — the coming home from school, rather than the painful leaving home for school. So of all other and what we are accustomed to think lesser griefs. We reasonably believe that He sees their true bearing, their right relation to the great sum of the individual's life and experience. Is it not for us, also, to strive for this broader outlook? and if, as reason and Faith alike demand, we attain to this, must it not necessarily guide our petitions to Him whom we call our Father?

In the biography of the Confederate general Sydney Johnston, written by his son, there is this touching passage: "He spoke little of his inner life; but once, in Austin, he said that a clergyman had been urging upon him the benefit of prayer, and added, 'I did not think it necessary to tell him that it is many years since I have closed my eyes in sleep without prayer. Indeed, I feel that I cannot thank God enough for His goodness to me. Beyond that thanksgiving I almost dread to go — His care is so great and my view so narrow, that I do not know how to ask God for anything better for me and mine than — His will be done.'"

In a great storm at sea, when the ship was momentarily expected to founder, the passengers gathered in the cabin, and one was asked to pray. Standing up, with his hands folded, he said, "Oh God, our Heavenly Father, Thy will be done, whatever it may be."

The loss and sorrow which turn your thoughts from this to the other life; the care or disappointment which forces you to see the vanity of human wishes and plans, and leads you to set your hopes higher—these may be infinitely greater sources of happiness to you than the most continued security, prosperity, and success.

Surely we may ask God to spare us suffering and sorrow; but surely, considering our relations to Him, our ignorance and His wisdom, we ought to ask, as Jesus prayed on the Mount of Olives, "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done." And as to Him in His agony, so doubtless to other faithful souls, there will appear "an angel unto Him from Heaven, strengthening Him."

"All things work together for good to them that love the Lord and do His commandments." Is it not for us to pray mainly that we shall be able to turn to our own and lasting good, to the improvement of our immortal parts, all the events of our

lives, be they joyous or sorrowful? that thus, as we "justify the ways of God to man," we may draw food, and not poison, for our daily bread?

It is not necessary that you should continue to live; but it is necessary that you should live rightly. To do that, you need that Divine help which you have a right to pray for. That is the main thing in life—the only real thing.

In the affairs of this present life we do not know —we cannot foresee what is for our good. That we should make known to God our wishes is reasonable; that we should expect these wishes to be granted as of course is unreasonable, considering our own ignorance and short-sightedness, and absolute incapacity to discern even the mere physical future, much less to foresee what circumstances will best serve to train us for the other and infinitely more important life. For the affairs of this life the true attitude is to do our duty; to be diligent, careful, discerning; to shape our lives according to His commandments, and to leave the rest to Him "who careth for us."

"If you want to be a sailor, the first thing you must learn is to do what the captain tells you," said an old seaman to a ship's boy. "I know that very well," replied the little boy. "If the captain tells you to jump overboard, you must jump at once,"

continued the wise old quartermaster. "But I cannot swim; I should drown," said the boy. "That's none of your business, my boy," was the reply; "that's the captain's business. Yours is to jump overboard when he orders you to."

That was the old rule of the sea, and it made men—brave and dutiful men—of the boys. It is the true rule of our lives towards God—to do our duties, and leave the result to Him. It is only as we live in this attitude towards our Father who is in Heaven, that we are able to keep our souls in peace and rest.

To live, and to live rightly, is not an easy task—God cannot help knowing that.

Prayer is when you speak with God. It may be that you have nothing to say to Him.

Then it is only respectful to keep silence.

Cultivate, however, as a means of comfort, of solace, of help towards well-doing, and towards serenity of soul, the habit of prayer—the habit, I mean, not of saying over set or meaningless phrases, but of speaking with God. It will lighten your cares. It will insure you good company. It will help you to consider your life, its meaning and purpose; to regard, in the right light, its joys and sorrows, its gratifications and disappointments. The spirit of prayer is the spirit of submission to a higher will,

and not that merely, but to an infinitely wiser and more intelligent will than you own.

If, by any chance, you do not need this Divine help and guidance, then do not ask it. Prayer is for you, not for God. The father does not so much need his children as they need him; his care, protection, and help. Doubtless your parents are happy if they possess your love and confidence; but they are so mainly because that enables them to instruct and benefit you.

But you will be unfortunate if you attain to years of discretion without such experiences of life, and such knowledge of your own weakness and inadequacy to any true living, as will make you desire and need constantly to ask our Father in Heaven for help.

All men who have risen above the intellectual condition of a pig in a sty have felt this need of some outward help in their lives to what they knew to be right living. When we look into our hearts and examine ourselves, we see that we are "prone to evil, as the sparks fly upwards," and that "the heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." "Allowing everything to be an instinct [in man] which anybody has ever asserted to be one," says John Stuart Mill, "it remains true that nearly every respectable attribute of humanity

is the result, not of instinct, but of a victory over instinct. * * * It is only in a highly artificial condition of human nature that the notion grew up, or I believe ever could have grown up, that goodness was natural." And again: "Of the social virtues it is almost superfluous to speak, so completely is it the verdict of all experience that selfishness is natural. By this I do not, in anywise, mean to deny that sympathy is natural also. * * * *But sympathetic characters, left uncontrolled and given up to their sympathetic instincts, are as selfish as others. The difference is in the kind of selfishness—theirs is not solitary, but sympathetic selfishness.*"

Scripture and one of the greatest of modern philosophers thus agree as to the natural character of man. But you need no other evidence than your own conscience. Examine your conduct, your motives, your thoughts, and you discover that you are far more easily and constantly moved to evil than to good. It requires a constant effort to keep even a tolerable control over our evil passions and propensities. "For the good that I would, I do not," says St. Paul; "but the evil which I would not, that I do;" and this is the experience of all men. Against the evil which thus asserts itself in us, and wars with our right and reasonable living, we are forced continually to strive. In this strife you may pray for

the help of God—that He may give you, at least, the desire for good. Here it is profitable to you to cultivate intimate relations with the Heavenly Father. Here you may ask, in the certainty that your earnest prayer will have answer.

It may be that you do not feel the need of this assistance. In that case you are free to do without it. Jesus not only taught us how to pray—He urged frequent, constant prayer; but as something needed for our own uses, our own protection, and not as the abject homage of a subject to a tyrant.

XVI.

CONDUCT OF LIFE.

Does the fact of a future life lessen for us the importance or interest of the affairs of the present?

On the contrary, I think you will see that this consideration is needed to give to the present stage of our existence its real value and interest. To hold otherwise would be to assert that the blind drifting of a wreck at the mercy of wind and current is more important than the fixed course of a ship bound for a port, and making a voyage of design and purpose. The master of such a ship has many cares and anxieties; he needs skill, foresight, prudence, watchfulness. He meets head-winds and treacherous currents, storms and baffling calms. He cannot always lie on his course, and he may be beaten off for a time by adverse gales; but he has always his port in mind, and his whole voyage is full of life, of interest and importance, because, and only because, to him, it has this definite purpose.

We are free, here, to choose moral good or evil for our lives, though evil is easier to us than good,

as it requires less effort of the crew of a ship to let her drift than to hold her to her course. Our physical lives, also, are largely under our own control. We inherit much, and we are subject, more or less, to our surroundings; but it is easy and mischievous to over-estimate the power of these influences. None of them, nor all of them, suffice to prevent man from maintaining true relations to God and to his fellowmen.

On the whole, the possession of wealth and power is, perhaps, the influence most strongly adverse to his right living who has them. Hence that deep saying of Jesus to the rich man: "One thing thou lackest; go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and follow thou me!" Yet, as He added to his disciples, "with God all things are possible;" and so the world has seen beneficent rulers, and rich men who, though not without great and constant care and labor, so managed that their wealth did not become directly or indirectly their curse.

As to poverty and distress, as to want and affliction, as to friendlessness and misfortune—these do not harden their hearts who suffer them; on the contrary, it is among the very poor that we see the most ready and uncomplaining self-sacrifice; it is when men are desolate and afflicted that they are moved to seek God.

In our bodies we are subject to natural laws, in common with other creatures; but, unlike other creatures, men are able by their intelligence and will to conquer adverse circumstances of many kinds; to "subdue the earth." "Our wills in their degree modify the course of nature," says that profound naturalist, Dr. Asa Gray, "subservient though that be to fixed laws. By our wills we make these laws subserve our ends. We momentarily violate the uniformity of nature." You may make of your life here largely what you wish. But to do that you must plan definitely, and must strive not merely with industry, but intelligently. No man's fortunes are so humble that he may not live an individual life; and it is that kind of living only—that maintenance of your individual will and character against all influences and pressure of society and surroundings which makes the man's life valuable or important, or even useful, to himself.

You become an intelligent and substantive being only as you strive to do what you have thought out for yourself to be the best and the right. It is in the strife to realize their own ideals that men become strong and intelligent—whether for good or for bad depends upon the choice they have made. To be a mere machine is not to be a man at all. The world was given us to conquer. Life was given

you that you should, by your own will and efforts, maintain it as your own life, and not suffer yourself to become, so far as your thoughts, your aspirations, your consent go, a mere insignificant fraction of that silly aggregate which we call Society. "For what is a man advantaged," asked Jesus, "if he gain the whole world and lose himself?"

Is, then, your life here under your own control to the degree I have suggested, and which is necessary to enable you to live a true and individual life? Undoubtedly.

Not without care, not without intelligent care, not without a constant struggle against evil inclinations and habits, not without thought, determination, the exercise of judgment and will — not, even, without suffering; and assuredly not without much and constant self-denial.

It needs the exercise of all your faculties to be a man—an immortal soul.

It is much easier to be a pig, and that career, also, is open to you; for in this world we are at liberty to choose.

But do not make the miserable mistake of holding Providence, or fate, responsible for your manner of life. "Ohne Phosphor kein Gedanke," the famous dictum of a German man of science ("Without phosphorus there is no thought"), may have its true side

—for it is only as much as to say that, in this life, without hands we cannot take hold; without a stomach we cannot digest; without a body we cease to live here in this world. But beyond this it has no sense or pertinence, as you may easily see by many instances.

Of all merely physical joys and advantages, for instance, health is undoubtedly by far the greatest. With sound health you may confidently look to accomplish any object you have at heart. With life, health, and patience, nothing is too difficult to achieve in this world. Now, pray notice that good health is at your command. It requires only your intelligent care to attain and keep it. The obvious proof of this lies in the well-known fact that persons of naturally feeble frame and constitution often live long and accomplish much. They have been compelled, as the very condition of living at all, to refrain from excess, and to observe the laws of health with care.

Do not, therefore, blame "the mysterious hand of Providence" for those incidents of your life which care and prudence could have prevented. "God helps those who help themselves," and His point of view is different, and much further-reaching than ours. It is clear that He designed us to increase our intelligence and our wisdom by the study of those

laws according to which the world about us goes on. The fire which burns our fingers forces us by suffering to the knowledge of its effects. The intelligent observance of natural laws suffices to prevent the greater number of those physical ills and misfortunes of which mankind complain, and which they are too apt to lay at the door of Providence. Moderation in living secures health; moderation in the pursuit of your objects insures security against serious losses and disappointments. To do your duty to others is to seize on the greatest source of happiness attainable here.

Good health is a result of moderate living. Be moderate in all things; that insures not merely a healthy body but a clear spirit. It is the immoderate and selfish pursuit of fortune, ambition, amusement, which depraves the man physically, and also spiritually. It puts him out of perspective with the real world; he loses the right relations and proportions of things, and flings away the large future for the petty present. In that immoderate pursuit of any object the blood is heated, the grosser, the merely animal part of us becomes unduly powerful, and gains the upper hand. I could not discover a drunkard in the records of the life-long moderate drinkers of beer and wine in the German communistic societies in this country; and I could not help

but attribute so singular a fact to their habitual moderation in life, their freedom from anxious cares about careers, fortunes, fashions, and personal ambitions. Long life, and a healthful long life, may or may not be desirable; but that it is easily attainable is sufficiently shown by the mortuary statistics of all our communistic societies.

No selfish living is healthful or natural. It is what you do for others that is useful to yourself, and that only. It is as you serve your fellow-men, and strive to make the lives of others happier and better, that you attain happiness and a healthful spirit for yourself. Self-sacrifice is the essential of Christian life, and the means to any satisfactory life either here or beyond. Teach yourself early to take interest in the lives of others. Give some part of your time to the benefit of your fellows; it is the best "investment" you can make, for it will not only procure you the love of others, but it will broaden the foundations of your own life. No one is so humble or so poor that he cannot thus give a part of himself for the benefit of his fellow-men; if no more, his example of cheerful industry, moderation in living, thoroughness of work, honesty, and loving kindness, if he is the least in the community, gradually permeates it with his own spirit, as the fragrance of violets imperceptibly fills a room. Un-

obtrusive well-doing is, perhaps, the greatest influence for good in any community. A good mechanic or artisan—thorough, intelligent, kind, and cheerful—no matter how apparently inconspicuous his place in the community, is likely to be the most potent man for good in his circle; his life is of more solid and enduring value to the men and women among whom he lives than those of fifty or a hundred "men of wealth and influence," so called.

No merely selfish living is healthful for either the spirit or the body. But to unselfish living goes constant and courageous self-denial, and the cultivation of a spirit of independence. To do right against temporary aberrations of public opinion, or against the fixed prejudices of those among whom you live; to live your own life contentedly, and refuse to follow the general example; to refuse to put out your hand for the things regarded as desirable and enviable by the mass; to practise moderation in the midst of the general hurly-burly, and prefer your own objects to those of the multitude—this kind of living is not easy; but it is the only way of life to him who has a just value for life at all.

You need hope for no really good thing without labor. Nothing for nothing is a law which applies to all parts of our lives: do not try to evade it, for

you cannot. Neither knowledge nor good-fortune, neither right living nor enjoyment, nothing worth having comes easily, or without persistent labor and self-denial. There are no exceptions to this law; there is no such thing as good-luck. The unlucky man has lacked persistence, or tact, or concentration of purpose: but no one has these qualities without having laboriously acquired and strengthened them.

Pursue your aim with industry and intelligence, therefore; expect nothing of fortune. But examine your plans of life to see if they really tend to good; if in their accomplishment you will benefit others as well as yourself. Try to foresee what effect the achievement of your ends, and your labors for that purpose, are likely to have upon your spiritual life. Many men have believed that it is possible to push one's purposes too forcibly, and that success may become a great curse; and for the proof that this is true you need not go far to seek in any community, for the examples are but too abundant of men who have gained wealth at the cost of health, or power at the cost of character.

Don't speculate. It is an attempt to get something for nothing; and if it does not fail immediately, so much the worse for you, for it is certain to be a calamity to you. Not only is easy got easy spent, but, what is of more importance, what is got

in these ways does not train you in the getting it; and wealth is so dangerous a possession, even to the wisest and most moderate men, that we need all the training we can get in the labors and sacrifices by which we may legitimately accumulate even a small surplus, to enable us to use it with only a very small degree of wisdom and safety to ourselves, and benefit to those about us.

Prosperity is a great temptation even to good men. Jesus was not wrong when He declared how hard it is for a rich man to enter the kingdom of Heaven; meaning, of course, to fit himself for that state. If you carefully look about you, you will conclude that perhaps the industrious poor are God's favorites.

The men who are engaged in the mere pursuit of wealth, or of any other selfish object, become narrowed in their views and grasp; their general judgment is distorted, weakened, as their particular aim engrosses them more; and the mere pursuit of wealth, I would like you to believe, is one of the lowest, least satisfying, and least elevating forms which human exertion takes.

Not only is the pursuit of wealth an injury to your spirit and intelligence, but it is, in the majority of cases, an injury to others. Few men attain great wealth, or keep it, without oppressing, or, at

the least, lessening the opportunities and narrowing the lives of some others. Great possessions are very apt to separate their owners from those who serve them, and, in a degree, from mankind. Their sympathies are narrowed as the sense of power begotten by wealth increases.

> "Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
> Where wealth accumulates, and men decay,"

is sound economy as well as good poetry. Hence, prefer rather to live among the poor than the rich. A community without industrious working-men, but made up entirely, or mainly, of the wealthy and their dependents, is the poorest company you can get into.

Avoid every pursuit which will separate either your interests or your life from the interests of the mass of the community.

Plan your own life. Do not suffer yourself to be bullied by society or the general opinion of your friends. If you want very much to do something, and it is right and honest, go ahead and do it. You may fail at it; you may have judged unwisely; but at any rate you will have strengthened your will; you will have been yourself, and not the creature of other people's advice; and you will have earned in experience more than money's worth.

This does not mean that you are selfishly to avoid or reject your duty to others, rightfully dependent on you. It may be your part to deny yourself the gratification of even a very strong impulse towards a favorite career or occupation — to give up your own will and wishes, for the sake of those dependent on you. Do that with a cheerful and manly spirit; count yourself the happier, as you will be the better man, for having your duty so plainly marked out for you.

With men as with machines it is never economical to work up to the full power. It is a strain to do so. Hence it is an unwise though a common ambition which carries men into work which they can do only with difficulty. Seek a career where you can do your best easily. It is better that the man should be too big for the place than the place for the man. Better, in part, because he needs leisure; he ought to be many-sided; he cannot hope to know any one thing well unless he has had leisure and desire to know many others.

Try, however, to learn some one thing thoroughly. No matter what it is, you will find that when you do know that one thing thoroughly, you will have a satisfactory knowledge of many others. All knowledge is closely inter-related. The mischief is that so many people only "know a little something."

Thoroughness of work is honesty, and honesty is the best policy even for this life. If God had made it otherwise, He would have introduced constant confusion into our lives. Hence, what you do, do with a will; put your best thought and skill into your work, and try early to acquire the habit of doing this. It is not easy to fix yourself in that, but nothing is more worth your while. The cheapest thing you can do is to pay your debts and do good work. Your *best* is what you owe to the world, and to yourself even more, no matter how humble the work may be.

Therefore, value your work for the work's sake, and not for the reward or success it is to bring you. The laborer is worthy of his hire, but he is a poor creature if he works only for the wages he is to get; and he will never do good work on that condition alone. A man, if he is really a man, values and honors his work, takes pride in it, and does it well and thoroughly for its own sake, and for *his* own sake, and not for the wages. Hence, a good mechanic, or farmer, is always an intelligent man—very often the most intelligent and the wisest man in the community. He has found it needful for his own satisfaction to know one thing thoroughly; and to do that he has necessarily to know something of a good many others. No kind of work is so low that this

is not true of it. I knew a gardener's laborer who earned his daily bread with a spade, but who had made himself a good florist, and no mean botanist.

Nor is any work so high in the scale but that he who does it for the reward alone, be this money, or place, or power, will become a narrow and stupid soul.

XVII.

CONDUCT OF LIFE (*Continued*).

TAKE care to do all in the spirit of love and good-will to your fellow-men: whatever is done in the spirit of hatred, malice, or envy must fail. It cannot and does not succeed in the long-run, and it will surely injure him who does it.

Teach yourself to despise ambition; it is one of the meanest of the passions. Human society needs all the help it can get from its bravest and ablest members; if you have somewhat of capacity for good, do not be impatient or fearful lest the world should not discover it. Do your work, and train yourself to be content with that.

This is not easy, for young people hunger for recognition; but it is your only wise and manly course. If you have ability you will be found out, never fear. Men say of a young fellow that he is "ambitious," and the foolish world counts it a merit in him; and he presently, under this vulgar stimulus, thinks it legitimate and even honorable to push his own fortunes; comes to regard success as the main

object, and thinks he has done well when, by dint of vigorous elbowing and scheming he has contrived to push himself into a place much too big for him, where he rattles around like a pea in a tin pot.

Personal success is a matter of very minor consequence. The success of a noble cause, of a great and beneficent idea—that is another thing; but even that its supporters can but rarely hope to see victorious. It is theirs, as true men feel, to do what they can, to suffer such obloquy as such men are pretty sure to encounter in a good cause, and to be content with the consciousness that they have done their duty. Nor is it too much to say that, whatever they may suffer, they have their sufficient reward in the development and training of their own souls, which those receive who rightly and wisely, not in hatred or fanatically, but with a loving spirit, combat error, or uphold the truth against oppression.

Whether you win or not is not the real question, but whether you have lived unselfishly and done your best for your fellow-men in that place, however humble, in which you are cast.

"Magnify your office," which means that you shall think highly of your work. I know an errand-man who has been the most faithful and intelligent of errand-men for thirty years. I know no one who is prouder, or more justly proud of his work; and I

have known Presidents and cabinet ministers who were far less worthy of respect, and, in fact, far less respected than this humble servitor, who does his daily drudgery with the pride and enthusiasm of a king.

It may seem to you a hard saying, but it is nevertheless true, that only that wealth or that fame which comes to you without your own seeking can possibly be useful to you, or even in any high sense creditable to you. No good work perishes or remains unknown. You will always receive all the fame and credit in the world to which your ability and work entitle you; and if you should not, so much the better. The world will owe you something, and of that you may think with just pride—but not with discontent.

Do not, therefore, aim to be rich, or to be famous, or to be in high places, or to be fashionable, or a favorite in what is called society Aim to be just, cheerful, patient, hopeful, and to do your duty well towards others.

Do not allow yourself to become a mere machine. In the present condition of what we call civilization it is difficult to avoid this. The whole tendency of our social arrangements is more and more to divide the community into two unequal parts—the few capitalists, employers, and the multitude who are their ser-

vants. Now, "service is honorable;" but the servant should be something more than that. He should strive to save some part of his life for himself. You may read of men who have passed a long life in making, not pins, but only the heads of pins. God, who is very good, has so contrived the spiritual part of us, that even men and women thus unfortunately placed may be good and truly heavenly-minded. But, if you can, you are entitled to choose a better part in life for yourself; and if you are to do no more than make pin-heads, try, first, to do that in the very best way possible; and, second, reserve, if you can, a small part of your life for something else and better—some line of intelligent thought and study—and remember that a lawyer who knows or cares about nothing but his cases, or a merchant who thinks only of his ventures and ledgers, these are even worse off than the men who contentedly spend their lives in making pin-heads. They become narrowed and dwarfed, and the more easily if they are prosperous and comfortable. Too often such men become like swine, glorying in the admirable arrangement and comfort of their sty.

I do not like to see young people pick out easy places for themselves. Comfort and ease may be necessary to the aged and feeble-bodied, but youth ought to hold them in healthful contempt, and pre-

fer a task or career which involves some hardship and self-denial. In that way they become men; their wills are braced, their faculties trained, their good habits fixed, their intellects brightened. Resist, therefore, the temptation to barter your independence for mere physical ease or pleasant social surroundings. Choose, rather, if you are free to choose, a struggle of your own with the world. It is good and fit that youth should be enterprising and adventurous.

Prefer to learn several things, and not one only. Do not be afraid of hardship and solitude: by experience of these men become masters of themselves; they learn how to get on with men; how to "fall on their feet," as the saying goes; how to get good out of even mishaps and failures; they make themselves truly independent, not only of men but of fortune. Herodotus has a fine passage about the ancient Persians, to whom, when they proposed to leave their own small and rugged domain, to possess a wider and richer, Cyrus gave this warning: "To prepare thenceforth, not to rule, but to be ruled over, for that delicate men spring from delicate countries, and it is not given to the same land to produce excellent fruits and men valiant in war. So that"—continues the old historian—"the Persians, perceiving their error, withdrew, and yielded

to the opinion of Cyrus; and *they chose rather to live in a barren country and command, than to cultivate fertile plains and be the slaves of others.*"

I have been told that when Thoreau was a young man he made lead-pencils, and made them very well. But one day he gave it up. His friends were amazed; he was doing well, and likely to be prosperous; he made the best kind of pencils, and they told him he ought by all means to go on. But he replied, "I have now made just as good pencils as I ever can make. I have done that thing as well as it is possible for me to do it; hence, it is time for me to stop that and go at something else." I think he was right. Being free of hand, having no one depending on his labors, he had not only a right to stop what had become a mere mechanical drudgery, but it was his duty to himself to do so.

Observe, if he had had wife and children or other helpless ones justly depending on him, his duty would have been to go on patiently and honestly making lead-pencils. I knew once a painter who, if he had had leisure, would have become famous; some of his works are justly admired, and rank very high. But he had a wife and numerous family; to have cultivated his art would have been to expose them to want, or at least to deprivation of comforts, and being a good man, he deliberately gave

up the work and career in which he might have won fame, and gave his life contentedly to bread-and-butter labors for those he loved and was bound to cherish. On the whole, he was a nobler man than Thoreau.

Men are like cabbages, which, as market gardeners will tell you, grow the stronger for being several times transplanted. In Germany, in former times, a young mechanic out of his apprenticeship was compelled to go forth into the world with his tools, and pass two or three years in foreign parts. Thus, it was rightly held, he became the abler mechanic and the better citizen. In his travels he acquired information; he was forced to match himself against other men in his calling, in order to earn his bread and the expenses of his journey; and this experience tended to make him a more civilized creature.

Wise parents begin early to form in their children a habit and love of reading, which should be but a stepping-stone to a love of knowledge. In these days, when even college life is full of bustle and striving and cramming and without proper leisure, to fix this habit early is of the greatest importance; for a genuine love of knowledge is hardly to be acquired under the pressure of a higher school, and we see constantly young men graduated and entering the turmoil of business or professional life,

content with what they have been forced to get by rote in the schools, and without that true resource and solace which he has whose mind is awakened, and eager to secure and apply some leisure time to explore new fields of science and thought.

But choose your books carefully. They are to be friends—do not carelessly take enemies into these places. Take care what you suffer to drop into your memory. It is hard to forget, and, alas! the vile and mean sticks to our memories more readily than the noble or good.

Whatever business or calling you are engaged in as your bread-and-butter work, remember that, useful as this is, you are right to regard it as your enemy; keep a part of your life free from this and for yourself; and value success less because it is to give you wealth or luxury, than because it may yield you some leisure to devote to other things than your calling and to higher ones.

Men, like some trees, begin to die at the top. Make an intelligent use of your brains, in order to secure health and long life. Two classes of men are noted for longevity — slaves, and students of large and broad intelligence; the first because they have been constrained to simple and very regular living in the open air, and without great anxieties. The others because it is the brain rightly and constantly

used which keeps the body in order, and thus prolongs life.

You can never be too old to learn; and there is probably no better time to go to school than after fifty.

Count it a misfortune, therefore, if your bread-and-butter work takes up all your time and strength, and see if by better management or a judicious economy in expense you cannot redeem some part of your life from this thraldom. Every man needs to be sometimes alone. This is necessary in order that you shall be able to "take stock of yourself," consider your life, get time for a look ahead; and that you shall not live in your higher and spiritual life from hand to mouth. Without such leisure and solitude we lose the true perspective; the present assumes undue and factitious importance, and hides from us the future, as a high fence conceals a landscape. What you need is to maintain a clear outlook, and this for your present well-being, but even more for its bearing on the future life. An effective man is one who sees things as they are; but how can you do this if you see only a part?

Here you will see the importance of that day of rest which is called "the Christian Sabbath." Protesting against the empty formalities with which the Pharisees had filled up this day, Jesus said, "The

Sabbath is made for man, not man for the Sabbath." On this day we may and ought to drop our cares, our plans, and strivings, and take time to rest not only the body, but the mind and heart. It is the day on which to reflect, to consider our lives and their tendency, our habits and our future. No one who labors but is grateful for this day. No one can abuse it by laboring on it, without injury to his body as well as his spirit. Even the animals are the better able for their work if they have this day exempt from labor; so that the commandment which forbids the use of beasts of burden on that day is—as are all the commands of God—entirely reasonable, and, to use a phrase of these days, "sound political economy." Nor can you misuse this day of rest for vain or frivolous purposes without injury to your spiritual nature, which needs rest, quiet, peace, relaxation, as much as your body.

The plan of life which I have mapped out will seem to you, perhaps, to require a good deal of self-denial. Yet according to this plan the wisest and best of our race have lived. Cultivate a taste for poverty. Plain living breeds sound thinking. But the whole tendency of the present time is against plain living, and to be contented with little has come to be counted a vice. Even the humblest are tempted to what seems to them luxurious living;

and because over the greater part of Christendom it is now conceded that "all men are born free and equal," therefore it is held that all men and women, to be respectable, must dress and live alike — as though that were needed to assert their equality of rights. The universal rule is to work harder, so as to spend more prodigally. But the wise man knows that he had better spend less and keep some leisure for himself; for thought, study, and healthful recreation. F.W. Newman wrote wisely: "To count but few things necessary is the foundation of many virtues."

Do not, therefore, clutter your life with many useless things. It is a habit which grows. Some people are no better than the slaves of old china or silver; and many houses are only museums on a small scale, whose owners and inhabitants are the least interesting of the contents, and often the least thought of. A love of simple pleasures is a small fortune to him who has it. They are the only lasting ones.

Hence, the country is to be preferred to the city. Cities are for diversion, for change, for the convenience of special studies; but sensible men live in the country. There you become hardy, you gain that knowledge which is, on the whole, best worth knowing—of trees, flowers, animals, and nature in general. Children learn early, in the care and subduing of animals, in training a dog or breaking a horse, to be

humane and to control their own tempers. Country employments and amusements bring health and a strong and well-directed will. And besides this, in country living simple habits are more easily maintained. The sight is not tempted by the multifarious objects of city shops, whose display leads men and women and even children to be discontented and envious, and to regard as necessaries of life what are really vast aggregations of superfluities. I knew some little girls brought up in the country to whom a stick doll was a source of as great happiness as the most magnificent satin-clad wax doll to a city child, and they were the happier and more healthful in body and mind, because their desires had not been excited by the sight of the city Christmas shops.

Moreover, by country living you prepare constant and invaluable resources for your old age. The city man grows helpless as the sere and yellow leaf of life comes on. He has become dependent on the excitements of society, and as his contemporaries die, or are scattered, he grows lonely. His house, furnished as splendidly as may be, he knows so well that its narrow limits bore him. He has no resource but business, and seeks to drown his loneliness in the excitement of adding to his fortune. His evenings are his secret terror. Why, do you suppose, are clubs, theatres, and other places of amusement in

great cities so crowded? Because the brilliant lighting, the crowded houses, the varied colors are a relief from the dull monotony of homes where the inhabitants fear to face themselves, and find no company so dull as their own. As we advance in years there is a vigorous struggle of the body to get the upper-hand, and the mischief of city life is, that it encourages this by the ease, comfort, convenience, gross feeding, and late hours to which it invites, and which all tend to make our spirits sluggish and inert. In California I knew an old Spaniard who, at sixty-seven, rode a hundred miles on horseback in a day and thought little of it; and I have often admired the simple, manly habits of the Spanish rancheros, who passed the day contentedly on horseback, with a little *pinola* or parched wheat, a lump of sugar, a cup of water, and a cigarette for their mid-day meal, and slept comfortably on the ground wrapped in a blanket, and with the saddle for a pillow.

You may object that modern civilization has made this denial of bodily comforts and luxuries needless; pretty things are nearly as cheap as ugly ones in these days; and why should you sleep on a hard bed when you can just as well have a soft one? But the answer is, that you are the less dependent on the mutabilities of fortune, the less a slave of the

will of others, the more truly a free man, as you have curbed and trained your body, and made it hardy and easily obedient to your higher will.

If you want to achieve any object here, it is of the first importance to you to live. Merely to live makes up a considerable part of every worldly success; in some careers we see that this has been the greatest part of it. Few men achieve anything valuable or important before forty; many do not even begin a career before then; and some, like Humboldt, Von Moltke, and George Bancroft, retain their intellectual activity for forty and even fifty years longer. Such men you will find have maintained all their lives simple and regular habits. But from forty to seventy is the life almost of a generation of men, and he who has kept his body as his servant, or useful machine, may in that long period achieve almost anything he sets his mind to.

When, however, the body has been pampered and indulged, intellectual activity, judgment, and will decline rapidly after fifty; it is then mainly the physical man who continues to exist, and to make more and more imperative demands on the spiritual part, warping the judgment, and controlling the will and energy that remain to low and often base ends.

Begin early, therefore, to deny your body; so you may hope to retain all your life that supremacy of

the intellectual over the mere physical part which alone makes life valuable or important. Eat moderately, sleep enough, and in as pure air as possible; be careful to contract no physical habits whatever—for that is to make yourself subject to your meaner part, the body, which becomes an intolerable and tyrannical master when once it gets the upper-hand, even in small things. The force of habit is very great, and bad habits become fixed with astonishing quickness. A great part of life consists in acquiring good and useful habits, and in avoiding and resisting the force of bad.

When we subdue to our will, or "break," as it is called, a colt or a young dog, what we really do is to habituate it to particular duties or exercises. The dog is taught that, when he hears certain words of command, he must at once perform certain tricks; the colt is accustomed to the bridle, the saddle, or the harness, and to the habit of going at a certain gait and none other when he has these upon him; and the habit of doing certain things under given circumstances soon becomes fixed, and a ruling force in the animal, so that an old war-horse, long since discharged and turned to peaceful uses, pricks up his ears at the sound of the bugle, and strives to find his accustomed place in the cavalry troop. In men, also, the force of habit is strong; but as our

lives are more various, and our intelligence of a quite different order, from that of the lower animals, and as our wills are free, so good habits at least sit more lightly, and we need to exercise greater care to maintain them. The habit of regular and continued labor, for instance, is more difficult for a young person to acquire than for a horse. A great many men and women never thoroughly acquire it, but go through life half doing many things, beginning a new project and leaving it unfinished for another, and inefficient simply because they have not the habit of systematically completing one piece of work before they begin another. Most of us begin our active life with this vice of ill-regulated and unsystematic exertion. Many of us are never cured of it; and to persons of an active imagination it is a matter of extreme difficulty to learn to be thorough, and to measure the things to be attempted by the time and strength which can be spared for them. Even to the most persistent of us the daily recurrence of a task becomes tedious and irritating, and this although we have deliberately set ourselves to it.

You will be the happier, and the more effective and useful members of society, if the spur of want, the necessity for regular and systematic labor to gain your daily bread, in early life, fixes in you this habit of working patiently at a task and completing it,

without diversion to another. This supremacy of your will over your desires, hard to gain, is invaluable in life; it is the first step towards the attainment of that faculty which John Stuart Mill defines as "the power of sacrificing a present desire to a distant object or general purpose," and which I think to be the highest intellectual attribute of man, the possession and exercise of which is necessary, not only to the attainment of any valuable object in this life, but more still to the proper training of our spirits for the future life.

In all parts of our lives we have constantly to sacrifice the less to the greater, the immediate to the future. To secure and retain health you must go to bed and rise at regular hours, eat at fixed times, deny yourself those things which, while pleasant, experience tells you are hurtful: that is to say, your will must keep yourself under a number of irritating restraints. And so from your earliest days your proper training consists in more or less irksome and often painful self-control. The acquisition of knowledge at school is irksome; the daily recurring task of the workman, in whatever calling, from the lowest to the highest, is irksome; the acquisition of any virtue, of the habit of being or doing good, and not bad, in any one direction, is a matter of difficulty and of constant struggle, and has been so accounted

by wise men in all ages. Only that course of action which is useless to others, and hurtful to ourselves, seems easy.

That you should abhor a lie is a matter of course; but to slight your work, to do it imperfectly, is to lie. It is to be a sham; and when a man is contented with shams he has given up a great part of his real self to the devil. He has consented to be consciously dishonest.

Do your best, therefore; but do not do it to excel others. That is to cherish a vile and vain spirit. Teach yourself to rejoice in every other man's success that is worthily gained; to be pleased with the ability shown by others, even if it is shown to your own disadvantage. "Let the best man win" is the true motto in life; and if another wins over you, all the more you should remember that if he wins fairly, by greater excellence or ability, he ought to; that if he is better fitted for your place than you, you have no right there; while, if he wins unfairly, that is a contest into which you cannot, for your own self-respect, engage with him.

Make your friends slowly; but remember that real friendships must be made in youth. A part of the strength of this tie depends on tradition. Your friend of yesterday cannot bear the same relation to you as he who became your friend a dozen years

ago; and no true friendship has grown up or prospered without a communion of sacrifices, dangers, or trials. Hence it is said, and truly, that after forty men do not make new friends. Life is not long enough.

Maintain a decent reserve with all men, even with your best friends.

Be careful to keep your sorrows, disappointments, misfortunes and disagreements, your affairs in general, to yourself. The public has nothing to do with them, and sensible and reputable people do all they can to avoid publicity of every kind.

Any true friendship requires a certain identity of thought and aspiration in those who are thus to be joined; especially, I think, a sameness of religious faith; for it is scarcely to be supposed that two persons who think oppositely or differently on this, the highest and most important range of thought attainable by mankind, can feel for each other that confidence and esteem which are necessary to friendship.

Count yourself happy if you have found two or three friends. More no man is likely to possess.

Do not separate your life entirely from that of the community in which you live. "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together," says the Scripture. The most useful and important social relation

you can establish for yourself is membership in a Christian church.

A church is a society for the encouragement of its members in right living, and for the better ordering of benevolent efforts, the succor of the poor, friendless, and suffering. The congregation ought, therefore, to be composed of men and women in all the varying circumstances of life. The church is nothing if it is not democratic. Under its roof all ranks and grades, the poor and the wealthy, the well-informed and the illiterate, should be brought together in a true brotherhood, whose common Father is God. In such a church, rightly constituted, and living together in the relation of a larger family, you may be sure that the wealthier and more intelligent may learn more or gain more of true wisdom from their humbler brethren, than these from the former; for it holds true that the industrious poor are God's peculiar care.

The restraints thrown about you by your membership in a church are all useful and important. Do not think that forms are useless. Social restraints are very necessary to all men and women. Isolation is dangerous to human beings; it requires uncommon strength of resolution and forethought not to deteriorate in solitude, and the maintenance of certain forms, which is rightly insisted on by civilized

society as a protection against deterioration not only of manners but of character, is never so necessary as in solitude or in country life. Kinglake, the historian, has a striking story of an officer who later became a distinguished general in the Crimean War. Being in early life sent into the Canadian wilderness to superintend the rude labors of a force of rude men, which obliged him to rough work all day, he, to preserve himself from the deterioration which he felt threatened him in such a life, determined that he would every day dress for dinner as carefully, and have that meal served with as much form and ceremony as if he had been in London, and spend the evening, if in solitude, still with all the semblance of a high civilization about him. When asked later how he survived his years in the backwoods he gave this expedient as the only reason. You may get a useful and important lesson from this.

Now, of all social restraints and good influences membership in a really Christian church, one imbued with the essential spirit of Christianity, yields the most valuable and important fruits. In what is called "society," in the social circle formed by your friends and acquaintances, you see only people substantially of the same walk in life, circumstances, and habits of thought which you also have, and the chief object is amusement, rest, relaxation from care,

and the benefit of more or less intelligent associates. In a true church you should meet, on much higher ground and in more important relations, men and women of many and different walks in life. You may see there, as nowhere else, the real value and importance of a genuine democracy. If your relations to your fellow-members are such as they ought to be, you will presently be profoundly impressed with the fact that "manhood and worth from no condition rise;" and if you should happen to be even the most learned, or the most highly placed, or the most wealthy or otherwise prominent member of this society, you may learn, and will learn, very many lessons of goodness, of the highest moral worth, from the lowliest of your fellow-members. You will see how independent goodness and moral excellence are of mere outward circumstances; with what courage those submit to ills, with what generosity they give, with what sound intuitions they see, with what clear and living faith they worship, whose lives are far less favored than your own. And these lessons should be of more worth to you than many sermons, and will humble your pride, as you see how much better, how much less selfish, more patient, and more Christlike, often, are the poor than the wealthy and powerful of the land.

In an ideal state of society the average industri-

ous man should, without pinching economy, have laid by enough at fifty to enable him and his wife the remainder of their lives to live in comfort. Not that he should thereafter be idle, but that, retiring from the pursuit of wealth at fifty, he might thereafter give his leisure to society, to works of public usefulness; or, if he were not able or inclined for this, to a more natural and leisurely life, to the cultivation of his mind by books, and the pursuit of some special study.

By such withdrawal more room would be left and more opportunity given for the young men coming forward in all pursuits of life; we should hear less of overcrowding, and there would be less greed and less deprivation in all the ranks of life. In short, we should see the present intense and in many respects almost ferocious struggle sensibly ameliorated. Of course there is no way by which society can compel men to thus regulate their lives and moderate their wishes, for it would be in vain to try to make men unselfish by act of Congress. But that is no reason why you should not, at the beginning of your active life, plan it on this scale.

But to do this you need not only or merely to be industrious and faithful in the beginning of your life, and not wasteful; what is of far greater importance is, that you must accustom yourself early in

life to be contented with a moderate scale of living; that you should early discover what is absolutely essential to intelligent living, and firmly determine to leave off the unessential; that you should accustom yourself to be satisfied with a degree of comfort not so great but that you may fairly hope to have laid by, at the age of fifty, the means of living on, on that scale; and, what is still more important, have fixed the habits which will make you content to do so.

It is an important help towards this to teach yourself early in life to see pretty things, and to like them, and to have a correct judgment about them, without coveting them. It will take a great deal of practice to make you perfect in this.

But remember that pure air, sunshine, green grass and trees, a few flowers, access to good books, warmth in winter, and a moderate table and healthful dress, make up the absolute essentials of the later part of life.

It is a great point carried to have always an object ahead of you in life. Until forty this is easy enough, if you are at all of a manly and enterprising disposition. But when you have come to the end of your first set of objects, when you have gained the standing-place in the world which you sought, then take care. At that point many men and women

perish from mere inanition. They have secured fortune, or competence, and they spend the rest of their days in accumulating comforts and luxuries, as though a pig should make his sty more elaborately convenient. Or they sink into poor health, or to death, because, in fact, the end has come for them.

If you have means to travel, the best time for this enjoyment is after fifty. You will then have read enough to make travel useful and profitable.

Finally, remember always to maintain the true balance and perspective in your life. We are often curious to know how the other, the future life, will look to us: think sometimes, How will this life look to you from that other side? How trivial and insignificant many of those which we thought the most important events, will seem from that point of view! how vitally important some things which we thought little of here! How grateful you will be there for much that seemed hardship, disappointment, or sorrow here at the time—how deleterious you will see were many events which caused you satisfaction.

Yet that broader survey will be the first that can give you a true view of your life here.

NOTES.

I DID not choose to encumber my pages with foot-notes, because these disturb the attention of the reader, and interrupt in his mind the course of the argument. But I add here, at the close, several extracts, referring each to the chapter it is intended to illustrate.

NOTE TO CHAPTER VII.

The following passage from the "Ninth Bridgewater Treatise" of the celebrated mathematician Charles Babbage illustrates so well, and by so interesting an instance, the difference between the supporters and opponents of the theory of Evolution, that, though long, I give it in full here. I am the more moved to do this because the volume from which I take it is no longer easily accessible except in public libraries:

"To illustrate the distinction between a system to which the restoring hand of its contriver is applied, either frequently or at distant intervals, and one which had received at its first formation the impress of the will of its author, foreseeing the varied but yet necessary laws of its action, throughout the whole extent of its existence, we must have recourse to some machine, the produce of human skill. But far as all such engines must ever be placed at an immeasurable inter-

val below the simplest of Nature's works, yet, from the vastness of those cycles which even human contrivance in some cases unfolds to our view, we may perhaps be enabled to form a faint estimate of the magnitude of that lowest step in the chain of reasoning which leads us up to Nature's God.

"The illustration which I shall here employ will be derived from the results afforded by the Calculating Engine; and this I am the more disposed to use, because my own views respecting the extent of the laws of Nature were greatly enlarged by considering it, and also because it incidentally presents matter for reflection on the subject of inductive reasoning. Nor will any difficulty arise from the complexity of that engine; no knowledge of its mechanism, nor any acquaintance with mathematical science, being necessary for comprehending the illustration, it being sufficient merely to conceive that computations of great complexity can be effected by mechanical means.

"Let the reader imagine that such an engine has been adjusted; and that it is moved by a weight; and that he sits down before it, and observes a wheel, which revolves through a small angle round its axis, at short intervals, presenting to his eye, successively, a series of numbers engraved on its divided circumference.

"Let the figures thus seen be the series 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc., of natural numbers, each of which exceeds its immediate antecedent by unity.

"Now, reader, let me ask how long you will have counted before you are firmly convinced that the engine has been so adjusted that it will continue, while its motion is maintained, to produce the same series of natural numbers? Some minds are so constituted, that after passing the first hundred terms, they will be satisfied that they are acquainted with the law. After seeing five hundred terms, few will doubt; and after the fifty-thousandth term the propensity to believe that the

succeeding term will be fifty thousand and one will be almost irresistible. That term *will* be fifty thousand and one; and the same regular succession will continue; the five-millionth and the fifty-millionth term will still appear in their expected order; and one unbroken chain of natural numbers will pass before your eyes, from *one* up to *one hundred million.*

"True to the vast induction which has been made, the next succeeding term will be one hundred million and one; but the next number presented by the rim of the wheel, instead of being one hundred million and two, is one hundred million *ten thousand* and two. The whole series from the commencement being thus:

1
2
3
4
5
. . .
. . .
. . . . .
. . . . .
99,999,999
100,000,000
regularly as far as 100,000,001
100,010,002 the law changes
100,030,003
100,060,004
100,100,005
100,150,006
100,210,007
100,280,008
. . . . . .
. . . . . .

"The law which *seemed* at first to govern this series fails at

the hundred million and second term. This term is larger than we expected, by 10,000. The next term is larger than was anticipated by 30,000, and the excess of each term above what we had expected forms the following table:

10,000
30,000
60,000
100,000
150,000
::: :::

being, in fact, the series of *triangular numbers*,* each multiplied by 10,000.

"If we now continue to observe the numbers presented by the wheel, we shall find, that for a hundred, or even for a thousand terms, they continue to follow the new law relating to the triangular numbers; but after watching them for 2761 terms, we find that this law fails in the case of the 2762d term.

"If we continue to observe, we shall discover another law then coming into action, which also is dependent, but in a different manner, on triangular numbers. This will continue

---

* "The numbers 1, 3, 6, 10, 15, 21, 28, etc., are formed by adding the successive terms of the series of natural numbers thus:

$$1 = 1.$$
$$1 + 2 = 3.$$
$$1 + 2 + 3 = 6.$$
$$1 + 2 + 3 + 4 = 10, \text{ etc.}$$

They are called triangular numbers, because a number of points corresponding to any term can always be placed in the form of a triangle; for instance:

through about 1340 terms, when a new law is again introduced, which extends over about 950 terms; and this too, like all its predecessors, fails, and gives place to other laws, which appear at different intervals.

"Now, it must be remarked, that the law *that each number presented by the engine is greater by unity than the preceding number*, which law the observer had deduced from *an induction of a hundred million instances*, was not the true law that regulated its action; and that the occurrence of the number 100,010,002 at the 100,000,002d term was *as necessary a consequence* of the original adjustment, and might have been as fully foreknown at the commencement, as was the regular succession of any one of the intermediate numbers to its immediate antecedent. The same remark applies to the next *apparent* deviation from the new law, which was founded on an induction of 2761 terms, and also to the succeeding law; with this limitation only—that while their consecutive introduction at various definite intervals is a necessary consequence of the mechanical structure of the engine, our knowledge of analysis does not enable us to predict the periods themselves at which the more distant laws will be introduced.

"Such are the facts which, by a certain adjustment of the Calculating Engine, would be presented to the observer. Now, let him imagine another engine, offering to him precisely the same figures in the same order of succession; but let it be necessary for the maker of that other engine, previously to each apparent change in the law, to make some new adjustment in the structure of the engine itself, in order to accomplish the ends proposed. The first engine must be susceptible of having embodied in its mechanical structure that more general law of which all the observed laws were but isolated portions — a law so complicated that analysis itself, in its present state, can scarcely grasp the whole question. The second engine might be of far simpler contrivance;

it must be capable of receiving the laws impressed upon it from without, but is incapable, by its own intrinsic structure, of changing, at definite periods, and in unlimited succession, those laws by which it acts. Which of these two engines would, in the reader's opinion, give the higher proof of skill in the contriver? He cannot for a moment hesitate in pronouncing that that on which, after its original adjustment, no superintendence was required, displayed far greater ingenuity than that which demanded, at every change in its law, the intervention of its contriver.

* * * * * * *

"In turning our views from these simple consequences of the juxtaposition of a few wheels, it is impossible not to perceive the parallel reasoning, as applied to the mighty and far more complex phenomena of nature. To call into existence all the variety of vegetable forms, as they become fitted to exist, by the successive adaptations of their parent earth, is undoubtedly a high exertion of creative power. When a rich vegetation has covered the globe, to create animals adapted to that clothing, which, deriving nourishment from its luxuriance, shall gladden the face of nature, is not only a high but a benevolent exertion of creative power. To change, from time to time, after lengthened periods, the races which exist, as altered physical circumstances may render their abode more or less congenial to their habits, by allowing the natural extinction of some races, and by a new creation of others more fitted to supply the place previously abandoned, is still but the exercise of the same benevolent power. To cause an alteration in those physical circumstances — to add to the comforts of the newly created animals—all these acts imply power of the same order, a perpetual and benevolent superintendence, to take advantage of altered circumstances, for the purpose of producing additional happiness.

"But, to have *foreseen*, at the creation of matter and of

mind, that a period would arrive when matter, assuming its prearranged combinations, would become susceptible of the support of vegetable forms; that these should in due time themselves supply the pabulum of animal existence; that successive races of giant forms or of microscopic beings should at appointed periods necessarily rise into existence, and as inevitably yield to decay; and that decay and death—the lot of each individual existence—should also act with equal power on the races which they constitute; that the extinction of every race should be as certain as the death of each individual; and the advent of new genera be as inevitable as the destruction of their predecessors; to have foreseen all these changes, and to have provided, by one comprehensive law, for all that should ever occur, either to the races themselves, to the individuals of which they are composed, or to the globe which they inhabit, manifests a degree of power and of knowledge of a far higher order."—BABBAGE.

"By a different distribution of atoms in the primeval world a different series of living forms on this earth would have been produced. From the same causes, acting according to the same laws, the same results will follow; but from different causes, acting according to the same laws, different results will follow. So far as we can see, then, infinitely diverse living creatures might have been created consistently with the theory of evolution; and the precise reason why we have a backbone, two hands with opposable thumbs, an erect stature, a complex brain, about two hundred and twenty-three bones, and many other peculiarities, is only to be found in the original act of creation. I do not, any less than Paley, believe that the eye of man manifests design. I believe that the eye was gradually developed, and we can in fact trace its gradual development from the first germ of a nerve affected by light-rays in some simple zoophyte. In proportion as the eye became a more accurate instrument of vision it enabled its pos-

sessor the better to escape destruction, but the ultimate result must have been contained in the aggregate of the causes, and these causes, as far as we can see, were subject to the arbitrary choice of the Creator."—JEVONS.

"Doubtless there is in nature some invariably acting mechanism, such that from certain fixed conditions an invariable result always emerges. But we, with our finite minds and short experience, can never penetrate the mystery of those existences which embody the Will of the Creator, and evolve it throughout time. We are in the position of spectators who witness the productions of a complicated machine, but are not allowed to examine its intimate structure. We learn what does happen and what does appear, but if we ask for the reason, the answer would involve an infinite depth of mystery. The simplest bit of matter, or the most trivial incident, such as the stroke of two billiard-balls, offers infinitely more to learn than ever the human intellect can fathom. The word cause covers just as much untold meaning as any of the words *substance*, *matter*, *thought*, *existence*."—JEVONS.

NOTE TO CHAPTER VIII.

The "How" we more and more comprehend; the "Why" remains as much a mystery as in the beginning of science. Thus, Tyndall, in his lectures on "Sound," explains the mechanism of the ear, and how when sound-waves act upon or are propelled against the tympanic membrane, "this is thrown into vibration, its motion is transmitted to the ends of the auditory nerve, and afterward along the nerve to the brain, where the vibrations are translated into sound." This is an admirably clear explanation of "How" the sound-waves reach the brain; it gives us the mechanics of the phenomenon; but Mr. Tyndall adds: "How it is [he really means Why] the motion of the nervous matter can thus excite the con-

sciousness of sound is a mystery which the human mind cannot fathom."

Professor Tyndall here, with the frankness and honesty of a true scientific mind, noted for his readers the limitation of scientific research. There are, unfortunately, men of science who do not note this, even to themselves. Thus, the late Professor W. K. Clifford apparently thought he had *explained* one stage of the coming about of the bodies which form the universe: when he said "What they [the gaseous particles] have done is to fall together and get solid."

Now, that may be a correct statement of the method of a mechanical operation; but it does not tell us Why they thus fell together. Professor Clifford taught that, in considering the origin of the universe and of life, it was not necessary to consider the agency of a Creator. But there is, antecedent to the question, Why the cosmic dust "fell together and became solid," still another: Why should there have been these particles or atoms?

I incline to insist here upon this question, because, since the chapter in which it is suggested was written, I have noticed an increasing disposition, among young students of science with whom I have conversed, to leave it out. Their attention has not been called to it by their teachers; or not sufficiently to produce that impression upon their minds which, nevertheless, ought to be made; and they are apt to believe that scientific inquiry has penetrated the real mystery of the universe; whereas, in fact, as all profound scientists confess, it has only served to magnify that mystery of the origin, the Why of things. I therefore append here a number of instances, to impress upon the reader that, while in

these days we know much, that knowledge shows us only that of the total to be known we know, in fact, very little. To repeat the wise saying of Professor Asa Gray: "We know more of how things go on; but we know nothing of how things began."

Tyndall on "Sound" says: "Light, like sound, is excited by pulsations or waves; and lights of different colors, like sounds of different pitch, are excited by different rates of vibration."

But no one knows Why this should be so.

He adds: "The quickest vibrations which strike the eye have only about twice the rapidity of the slowest, whereas the quickest vibrations which strike the ear as a musical sound have more than two thousand times the rapidity of the slowest."

Surely a very wonderful statement—but why all this should be so, and why it should not be different, science does not pretend to tell us.

We know that a magnetic needle, when free to move, assumes a definite position, in general north and south. But we do not know Why it has this quality.

A magnet polarizes all masses of iron in its neighborhood. Why it has this extraordinary action we do not know.

"*The homogeneous is unstable* and must differentiate itself," says Spencer; and hence, in his opinion, comes the variety of human phases of intellectual condition.

It is a very broad generalization. But suppose it to be well-founded: Why is the homogeneous unstable?

We know that "when we warm a piece of very cold ice the absorption of heat, the temperature, and the dilatation

of the ice vary according to apparently simple laws until we come to the zero of the Centigrade scale. Everything is then changed; an enormous absorption of heat takes place without any rise of temperature, and the volume of the ice decreases as it changes into water." But we do not know why this happens as it does.

It has been ascertained that "most flowering plants bear more seed when fertilized by pollen from another flower or from another plant, *and are sometimes even sterile when fertilized by their own* pollen. Hence the common need of insect visitors, and the relation thus established between animals and plants, the former involuntarily aiding the reproductive processes of the latter. Flowers are often so shaped as to favor the visits of useful insects, and similarly the legs and mouths of insects are appropriately formed to enable them to visit, profitably to the plants, their nectar-bearing flowers."

All this looks like benevolent design by a wise and powerful Creator—but we do not know whether He could not have attained the same end by other means, nor Why He selected these.

To call a substance "protoplasm" surely does not explain the origin of life; nor does it eliminate the idea of an intelligent Creator. "Protoplasm," says Jevons, "may be chemically the same substance, and the germ-cell of a man and of a fish may be apparently the same, so far as the microscope can decide; but if certain cells produce men, and others as uniformly produce a species of fish, there must be a hidden constitution determining the extremely different result. If this were not so the generation of every living creature from the uniform germ would have to be regarded as a distinct act of creation."

NOTE TO CHAPTER IX.

A lady published some letters addressed by her to Professor Moleschott, in which the following sentiments occur:

"The moral rule for each man is given by his own nature only, and is different, therefore, for each individual. What are excesses and passions by themselves? Nothing but a larger or smaller overflowing of a perfectly legitimate impulse."

A philosopher belonging to the other sex indulges in the following dithyrambus:

"Enjoyment is good, and frenzy and love are good, but hatred also! Hatred answers well when we cannot have love. Wealth is good, because it can be changed into enjoyment. Power is good, because it satisfies our pride. Truth is good, so long as it gives us pleasure; but good is lying also, and perjury, hypocrisy, trickery, flattery, if they secure us any advantage. Faithfulness is good, so long as it pays; but treason is good also, if it fetches a higher price. Marriage is good, so long as it makes us happy; but good is adultery also for every one who is tired of marriage, or who happens to fall in love with a married person. Fraud is good, theft, robbery, and murder, if they lead to wealth and enjoyment. Life is good, so long as it is a riddle; good is suicide also after the riddle has been guessed. But as every enjoyment culminates in our being deceived and tired, and as the last pleasure vanishes with the last illusion, he only would seem to be truly wise who draws the last conclusion of all science—*i. e.*, who takes prussic acid, and that without delay."—*Nation*, N. Y.

In Berlin, in 1878, a Socialist procession, consisting of men

women and children, marched through the streets with a banner which bore the legend: "There is no future life. Eat and drink. We want no hereafter."

NOTE TO CHAPTER XIII.

A friend who did me the kindness to read my MS. advised me to omit the chapter on miracles, on the ground that I had given my attention to the discussion of natural laws, that my object was to show the reasonableness of Christianity, and that the consideration of miracles might with profit be omitted. I was unable to agree with him; and for the reason that to say that an occurrence is impossible because it is contrary to natural laws, is to assert that we know the limits of phenomena, which, however, we do not know. But I think it well to insert here a passage from the Ninth Bridgewater Treatise of Charles Babbage, to show in what way so clear-headed a mathematician as that distinguished author was able to discuss the question of "Miracles:"

"It is proposed to prove that—

"*It is more probable that any law, at the knowledge of which we have arrived by observation, shall be subject to one of those violations which, according to Hume's definition, constitutes a miracle, than that it should not be so subjected.*

"To show the probability of this, we may be allowed again to revert to the Calculating Engine, and to assume that it is possible to set the machine so that it shall calculate *any algebraic law whatever;* and also possible so to arrange it that at any periods, *however remote*, the first law shall be interrupted for one or more times, and be superseded by *any other law;* after which the original law shall again be produced, and no other deviation shall ever take place.

"Now, as all laws, which appear to us regular and uniform

in their course, and to be subject to no exception, can be calculated by the engine; and as each of these laws may also be calculated by the same machine, subject to any assigned interruption, at distinct and definite periods; each simple law may be interrupted at any point by a portion of any one of all the other simple laws: it follows that *the class of laws subject to interruption is far more extensive than that of laws which are uninterrupted.* It is, in fact, infinitely more numerous. Therefore, the probability of any law with which we have become acquainted by observation being part of a much more extensive law, and having, to use mathematical language, singular points or discontinuous functions contained within it, is very large.

"Perhaps it may be objected, that the laws calculated by such an engine are not laws of nature, and that any deviation from laws produced by human mechanism does not come within Hume's definition of miracles. To this it may be answered, that a law of nature has been defined by Hume to rest upon experience, or repeated observation, just as the truth of testimony does. Now, the law produced by the engine may be arrived at by precisely the same means—namely, repeated observation.

"It may, however, be desirable to explain further the nature of that evidence on which the fact, that the engine possesses those powers, rests.

"When the Calculating Engine has been set to compute the successive terms of any given law, which the observer is told will have an apparent exception (at, for example, the ten million and twenty-third term), the observer is directed to note down the commencement of its computations; and, by comparing these results with his own independent calculations of the same law, he may verify the accuracy of the engine as far as he chooses. It may then be demonstrated to him, by the very structure of the machine, that if its motion

were continued it would, *necessarily*, at the end of a very long time, arrive at the ten-millionth term of the law assigned to it; and that, by an equal *necessity*, it would have passed through all the intermediate terms. The inquirer is now desired to turn on the wheels with his own hand, until they are precisely in the same situation as they would have been had the engine itself gone on continuously, to the ten-millionth term. The machine is again put in motion, and the observer again finds that each successive term it calculates fulfils the original law. But, after passing twenty-two terms, he now observes *one* term which does not fulfil the original law, but which does coincide with the predicted exception.

"The continued movement now again produces terms according with the first law, and the observer may continue to verify them as long as he wishes. It may then be demonstrated to him, by the very structure of the machine, that, if its motion were continued, it would be *impossible* that any other deviation from the apparent law could ever occur at any future time.

"Such is the evidence to the observer; and if the superintendent of the engine were, at his request, to make it calculate a great variety of different laws, each interrupted by special and remote exceptions, he would have ample ground to believe in the assertion of its director, that he could so arrange the engine that any law, however complicated, might be calculated to any assigned extent, when there should arise one apparent exception; after which the original law should continue uninterrupted forever.

"Let us now consider the miracle alluded to by Hume—the restoration of a dead man to life. According to the definition of that author, our belief in such a fact being contrary to the laws of nature arises from our uniform experience against it. Our personal experience is small: we must therefore have recourse to testimony; and from that we learn that

the dead are *never* restored to life; and, consequently, we have the uniform experience of all mankind since the creation against one assigned instance of a dead man being so restored. Let us now find the numerical amount of this evidence. Assuming the origin of the human race to have been about six thousand years ago, and taking thirty years as the duration of a generation, we have—

$$\frac{6000}{30} = 200 \text{ generations.}$$

"And allowing that the average population of the earth has been a thousand millions, we find that there have been born and have died since the creation

$$200 \times 1{,}000{,}000{,}000 = 200{,}000{,}000{,}000 \text{ individuals.}$$

"Such, then, according to Hume, are the odds against the truth of the miracle; that is to say, it is found from experience that it is about two hundred thousand millions to one against a dead man having been restored to life.

"Let us now compare this with a parallel case in the calculations of the engine; and let us suppose the number above stated to be a hundred million times as great, or that the truth of the miracles is opposed by a number of instances, expressed by twenty places of figures.

"The engine may be set to count the natural numbers—1, 2, 3, 4, etc.; and it shall continue to fulfil that law, not merely for the number of times just mentioned—for that number is quite insignificant among the vast periods it involves—but the natural numbers shall follow in continual succession, until they have reached an amount which requires for its expression above a hundred million places of figures. If every letter in the volume now before the reader's eyes were changed into a figure, and if all the figures contained in a

thousand such volumes were arranged in order, the whole together would yet fall far short of the vast induction the observer would have had in favor of the truth of the law of natural numbers. The widest range of all the cycles of astronomy and geology combined sink into insignificance before such a period. Yet shall the engine, true to the prediction of its director, after the lapse of myriads of ages, fulfil its task, and give that one, the *first* and *only* exception to that time-sanctioned law. What would have been the chances against the appearance of the excepted case, immediately prior to its occurrence? It would have had, according to Hume, the evidence of all experience against it, with a force myriads of times more strong than that against any miracle."—BABBAGE.

"No experience of finite duration can give an exhaustive knowledge of the forces which are in operation. There is thus a double uncertainty; even supposing the universe as a whole to proceed unchanged, we do not really know the universe as a whole. We know only a point in its infinite extent, and a moment in its infinite duration."—JEVONS, *Principles of Science.*

NOTE TO CHAPTER XIV.

"So far am I from accepting Kant's doctrine that space is a necessary form of thought, that I regard it as an accident, and an impediment to pure logical reasoning. Material existences must exist in space, no doubt, but intellectual existences may be neither in space nor out of space; they may have no relation to space at all, just as space itself has no relation to time. For all that I can see, then, there may be intellectual existences to which both time and space are nullities.

"Now, among the most unquestionable rules of scientific method is that first law, that *whatever phenomenon is, is.* We

must ignore no existence whatever; we may variously interpret or explain its meaning and origin, but, if a phenomenon does exist, it demands some kind of explanation. If, then, there is to be competition for scientific recognition, the world without us must yield to the undoubted existence of the spirit within. Our own hopes and wishes and determinations are the most undoubted phenomena within the sphere of consciousness. If men do act, feel, and live as if they were not merely the brief products of a casual conjunction of atoms, but the instruments of a far-reaching purpose, are we to record all other phenomena and pass over these? We investigate the instincts of the ant and the bee and the beaver, and discover that they are led by an inscrutable agency to work towards a distant purpose. Let us be faithful to our scientific method, and investigate also those instincts of the human mind by which man is led to work as if the approval of a Higher Being were the aim of life."—JEVONS.

THE END.

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